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REBEL NEGRO PICKETS.

So much has been said about the wickedness of using the negroes on our side in the present war, that we have thought it worth while to reproduce on this page a sketch sent us from Fredericksburg by our artist, Mr. Theodore R. Davis, which is a faithful representation of what was seen by one of our officers through his field-glass, while on outpost duty at that place. As the picture shows, it represents two full-blooded negroes, fully armed, and serving as pickets in the rebel army. It has long been known to military men that the insurgents affect no scruples about the employment of their slaves in any capacity in which they may be found useful. Yet there are people here at the North who affect to be horrified at the enrollment of negroes into regiments. Let us hope that the President will not be deterred by any squeamish scruples of the kind from garrisoning the Southern forts with fighting men of any color that can be obtained

THE BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG.

ON pages 24 and 25 we publish an illustration of GENERAL HUMPHREYS'S MAGNIFICENT CHARGE AT THE BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG, from a sketch by Mr. A. R. Waud. We have heretofore published accounts of the battle, and will only subjoin here Mr. Waud's account of the charge:

"The strength of the rebel position at Fredericksburg has been described a number of times; it was, in short, a natural fortress of the most formidable character. Their guns were mounted along the crest of a steep hill, which formed a glacis sloping to the plain below, across which our troops had to charge. Along this glacis or slope runs a road inclosed by stone walls. Against the inside of these walls earth had been shoveled, and then covered with boards for the riflemen to lean on. Here, four ranks deep, they securely leveled their deadly weapons on our columns. In addition to this fortified road rifle-pits covered the hill-side in all directions.

"Against this magnificent defensible position, strong as Sebastopol, and more dangerous for an attacking force on account of the river in its rear, our troops were hurled all day. To what purpose all know now. The place was impregnable! French and Sturgis led their divisions with patriotic determination to the enemy's rifle-pits. Sturgis, suffering severely, held his ground, as it were, under the muzzles of the heavy batteries. French's column, shattered, broken, falling by hundreds, advancing still with heroism unparalleled, delivered its fire till the last cartridge was spent and nearly half its men killed and wounded. It retired as it came—over the open fields. After it came first Hancock's and then Howard's divisions, each charging more savagely than its predecessors, and holding the ground in front of the rebel works while its ammunition lasted. By this time the sun had set behind the rebel fortifications. The crimson-edged clouds gleamed luridly through masses of smoke, which almost obscured at times the placid sky, so peaceful in its quiet evening tints, and suggestive of the cessation of the day's labor. Not for the army, however, did it indicate repose. The rebel fire breaks out with more ferocity than ever. For sweeping across the fields come the divisions of Generals Humphreys and Griffin. Onward, a forlorn hope, they advance—the ground encumbered by the countless bodies of the fallen; knapsacks, blankets, guns, haversacks, canteens, cartridge-boxes, etc., strewed all over the plain. Shot, shell, canister, shrapnel, and grape is hurled as they approach. By column of regiments, led by their generals, and without firing a shot, that noble band continues on. General Humphreys, dashing ahead to a small rise in the ground, takes off his hat to cheer on his men. With reckless ardor his men, rapidly closing on the double-quick, answer cheers with cheers. Every member of the General's staff has been dismounted. The brave Humphreys himself has two horses shot under him. Here a strange thing occurs. Howard's division, lying on the ground and holding their position with the bayonet since their ammunition was expended, opposes the advance of the division of Humphreys. With pistol and sword the officers threaten and prevent the passage of another division over their prostrate lines, thereby throwing the advancing column into confusion—a confusion which may have prevented this, the last effort of the army, from being successful, for through the smoke the rebels are seen running from the wall.

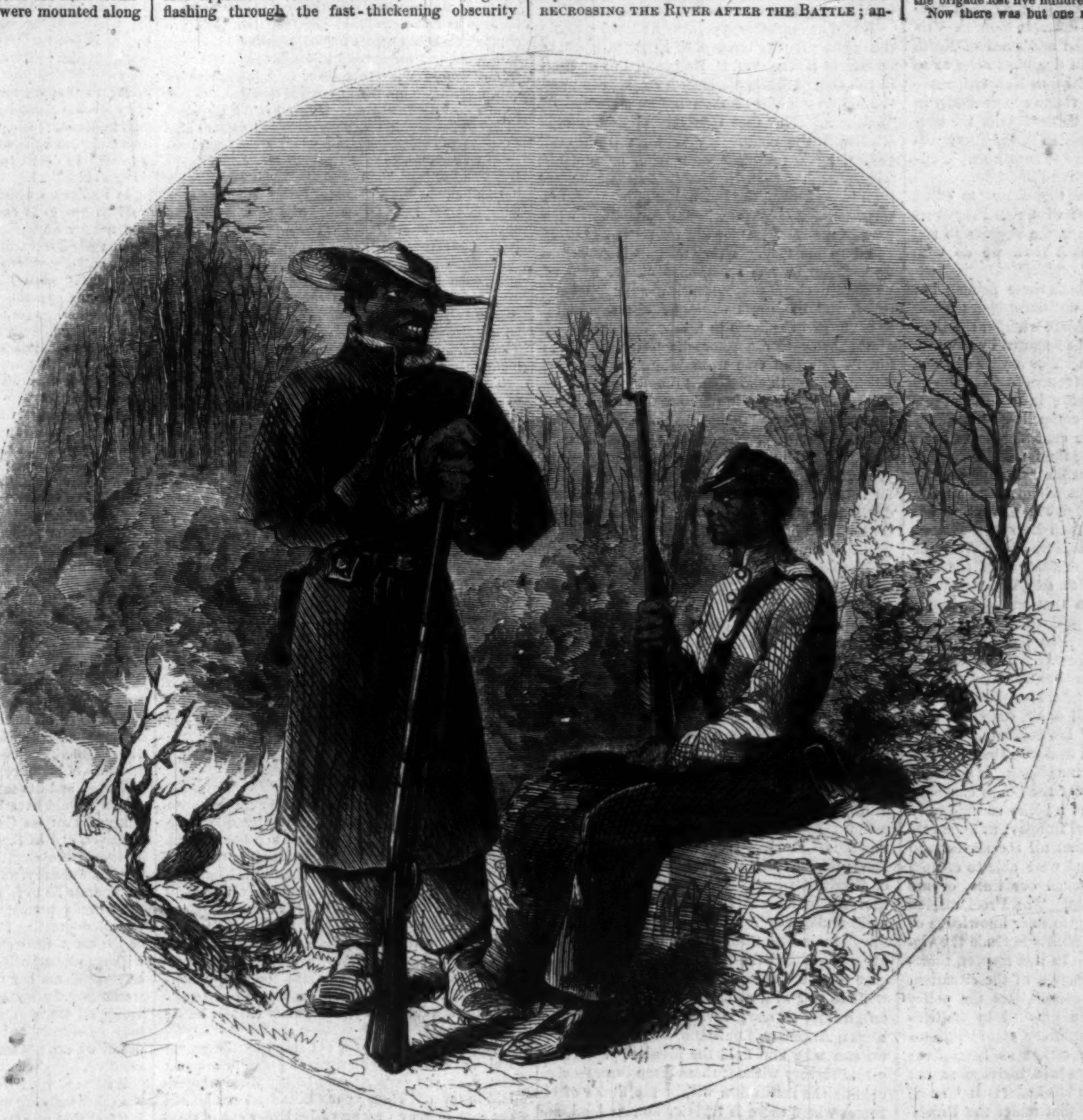
"Humphreys's division has never been under fire till this battle. But before that awful hurricane of bullets no heroism can avail. The hill-side appears to vomit forth fire, its leven glare flashing through the fast-thickening obscurity seems to pour with redoubled power upon our storming columns, till, being unable to stand up against it longer—although within eighty yards of the wall—the brave remnant, singing in the *abandon* of its courage, marches steadily back to the place where it formed for the charge, leaving its comrades in swathes upon the bloody ground, where, 'stormed at by shot and shell,' they had been cut down, whole ranks at a time, by that terrible fire.

"Thus closed the battle, except for now and then the boom of a heavy gun from the heights and the constant sharp report of the rifles of the sharp-shooters. But the horrors of that night—the scenes of despair and gradual death upon that bloody ground in the bitter cold and darkness—can not be described. Imagination recoils from the cruelty of the scene. No help for the dying patriots on that awful night. To attempt to reach them was to share their fate. The murderous traitors, without remorse, shot down all who approached. Men with children dependent on them—men whose wives trembled for them—men who had been little children, and whose mothers would have feared to have a cold wind blow on them—there they lay. Of no avail affection; not for them the soothing touch, the warm chamber, and the thousand nameless attentions of kinsfolk. Drearily and with faint hope for the morrow, tired, bleeding, dying, they must stay, their noble efforts idly wasted in a fruitless struggle."

On page 28 we publish several pictures of the Fredericksburg affair, from sketches by our special artist, Mr. Theodore R. Davis. One of these represents GENERAL FRANKLIN'S GRAND DIVISION RECROSSING THE RIVER AFTER THE BATTLE; another shows us the SKIRMISHERS DEPLOYED TO COVER THE RETREAT—some of them lying, others crouching behind every little hillock, or log, or stone which could serve as a protection against shot or shell, others exposing themselves more fully; another, OUR ARTILLERY FIRING UPON THE ADVANCING COLUMNS OF THE ENEMY to keep them at a respectable distance; and another, showing us THE HOUSE OF A. H. BURNARD, which was used by General Franklin as his head-quarters during the fight. It was in the grounds adjacent to this house, and within fifty yards of the door, that the gallant General Bayard was killed.

The following excellent account of the charge of Humphreys is from the *World* correspondence:

> Humphreys's division of Butterfield's corps was resting on its arms in the streets of Fredericksburg. General Butterfield sent an order to move it to the front; simultaneously Hooker ordered Hazard and Frank to take their batteries to the crest which our infantry had made their fighting line all the day long; to open rapidly, and concentrate their fire upon a certain point in the stone wall. This was a perilous undertaking, but it was executed in a most gallant manner. Hazard was at once in position, though losing sixteen men and eighteen horses before he fairly begun. Frank followed, took up a position farther to the left on the same line, and then both batteries opened with shell and solid shot at a range of only two hundred and seventy-five yards.
>
> While their cannonade was going on Humphreys, at the head of Allabach's second brigade, had crossed the mill-race, and was forming his men behind the crest ready for the charge, and Tyler's first brigade was following closely after, ready to support. The line was formed, the column moved gallantly forward, reached the line of battle, passed fifty yards beyond, when a deadly fire from behind the stone wall caused it to recoil, and finally to fall back, reforming under the crest from which it started. Humphreys and staff, and many other field-officers, were dismounted in this charge, their horses being killed, while the brigade lost five hundred men in fifteen minutes.
>
> Now there was but one more chance. Tyler's brigade had come up, and notwithstanding the turmoil, General Humphreys had succeeded in forming it in gallant style. The only hope now was with the bayonet. The men were ordered not to fire—to rely solely upon their trusty steel. Then, with great exertion, the batteries and the lines of troops on the crest were persuaded to cease firing while the charge was being made; then General Hooker exhorted his men not to quail, not to look back; to disregard the men in front who were lying down, covered by every projection; to ride over them.
>
> The officers were ordered to the front; then the brigade, led in person by General Tyler and General Humphreys, moved forward with a glorious cheer. They reached the little rise in the ground, within eighty yards of the stone wall, where line after line of our men lay flat upon the ground: they began to move over the living mass, when suddenly the prostrate men cried out, "Don't go there, 'tis certain death!" and, rising, began to impede the progress of the column, and by protesting of every nature implored the men not to go forward. Then the crisis came. The division was fighting its maiden battle; older troops than they qualled before the murderous volleys now making great gaps through their ranks; the head of the charging column was enveloped in a sheet of living flame; the hideous shells were bursting all around and in their midst. Was it any wonder that they faltered? The men began to load and fire; the momentum of the charge was gone; the column began to retire slowly, falling back to its place of formation. "Oh! men," said Humphreys, "if you had only gone forward as well as you came back!" And then, again dismounted, his second horse having been killed, he reported the result to General Butterfield, who ordered him to withdraw his troops to a point of shelter.
>
> And this was the forlorn hope of the day, and this is what it did: it demonstrated the impregnability of the enemy's positions—demonstrated that the bravest troops in the world could not stem the torrent of fire which poured and plunged and converged into that fatal space; and it developed a quiet, courteous, and accomplished man of science, with whom books, and charts, and surveys have been his studies, into a splendid field-general, of the most vigorous mien and distinguished bravery.



REBEL NEGRO PICKETS AS SEEN THROUGH A FIELD-GLASS.

DREAMS.

Wild wandering dreams! in dusky midnight stealing,
Why wake ye thus the memories of the dead?
Spirits departed to our gaze revealing;
Forms that we loved ere life's warm breath had fled,
Ye can not bring them back, false dreams! then why
Chase ye Sleep's angels from their guardian watch?
Like doves fast fluttering from the hawk away,
With quick dispatch.
Wherefore this mockery?
Wild wandering dreams!

Wizards of night! were you false phantom shade
A form with life-blood mantling as of yore,
A face whose lips, all trembling, half betrayed
The secret that the eyes had told before:
Were the dear image summoned yesternight
(Summoned in mockery) by my side to-day,
With beauty radiant as the stars of night,
Or shimmering lights that on blue ocean play—
Present in mortal guise as long ago,
I'd curse the spell that brought her to me so,
From starry spheres:
To roam with weary step this vale of tears
Suffering life's fitful fever through long years,
Then withering go,
Dying again!

Wild midnight revelers! if ye needs must come
On stars quick tripping—flash the soul away
Where dwell the blest around the Eternal throne:
Show us Heaven's raptures; paint Eternity;
But hovering earthward wake no memories here
Of loved ones blest!
Let angels tell us how old Time speeds on;
How soon the scytheman comes, and we are gone
To meet them there
And take our rest!

HARPER'S WEEKLY.

Saturday, January 10, 1863.

NEGRO EMANCIPATION.

BEFORE this paper is published the President will probably have issued his Proclamation offering freedom to all negro slaves resident in localities which have not elected representatives to Congress by a majority of legally constituted voters. It is hoped by the Northern partisans of slavery that the Proclamation will be postponed or withheld altogether. But we fail to discover any ground for the hope. Whatever reasons led the President to issue the preliminary Proclamation in September last apply with equal force to the case as it stands at present, and our recent reverses supply additional motives for securing the active aid of 4,000,000 slaves, if it can be done

The States and parts of States which will be excepted from the operations of the Proclamation will be the States of Delaware, Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri; the city of New Orleans, Louisiana; probably the cities of Memphis and Nashville, Tennessee; the city of Norfolk, and the vicinity of Fortress Monroe, Virginia; and a strip on the sea-board of North Carolina. Questions will doubtless arise as to the strict right of such cities as New Orleans—whose legally constituted voters are generally in the rebel army—to avail themselves of the benefits of the exceptional proviso in the Proclamation. But the chances are that that act, if enforced at all, will be construed liberally.

Two questions suggest themselves to every one's mind in connection with this Proclamation. First, will it induce the negroes to run away? and, secondly, what shall we do with them if they do?

Opinions differ upon both these points, but we imagine that most well-informed persons will, with the President, doubt whether the issue of the Proclamation will be followed by any general exodus of the slaves. For a year or more our armies have refused to return fugitive slaves. Wherever our generals have invaded the rebel States, they have been compelled by military necessity to welcome the contrabands to their camps. Notwithstanding the famous order No. 3, both Grant's and Buell's army practically gave freedom to the slaves whom they found in Western Tennessee. General M'Clellan has published a letter in which he states that no slaves were returned by officers of the Army of the Potomac after the enactment of the new "Article of War," but that, on the contrary, all contrabands deserting to that army were received, fed, and set to work. At Hilton Head, the slaves of South Carolina have had a safe refuge for more than a year. At New Orleans General Butler has received and employed every slave who fled thither. At Memphis General Sherman issued a general order, early last fall, directing the officers of his command to welcome fugitive slaves, and deal with them as freemen, at all events for the time being. It is hardly possible that the negroes of the South can have been generally ignorant of a policy so uniformly pursued on the entire rebel frontier; and the presumption therefore is, that all the slaves who wanted to run away, and were able to escape, either have already reached our lines, or are now endeavoring to do so. The Proclamation can hardly add any thing to their knowledge of our purposes, or to their ability to elude the vigilance of their masters. In this respect, therefore, it will effect no change in the situation. It merely affirms and consolidates the policy which has hitherto been pursued by individual commanders from military considerations. Slaves will continue to escape as heretofore; the number of runaways will increase as our armies advance and the blockade is tightened. Possibly the knowledge that under the Proclamation the faith of the United States is pledged to protect them in their rights as freemen may impart courage to some who are now hesitating, and so swell the tide of the fugitives.

The problem how to employ the contrabands will necessarily be solved by the war. Necessity will compel us to use them as soldiers. We shall require, to garrison the strategic points in the enormous country which we have undertaken to overrun, more troops than even the populous North can provide. It is clear that even a million of men will be found too few to attack and defeat the rebel armies, storm the rebel forts, and at the same time hold and occupy each point we take. A quarter of a million troops, in detached forts, may not prove too many to hold the line of the Mississippi River, after it has been reopened by our armies and our flotilla. For this service the negroes are well adapted, and whatever scruples may be entertained by individual generals, the logic of events compels us to assign them to it at several points. The work has already been successfully begun. We have a negro regiment at Hilton Head, and a negro brigade at New Orleans. A bill is pending before Congress for the equipment of 200 negro regiments of 1000 men each, and the feeling among loyal men is in favor of its passage. We shall have to feed and clothe the emancipated negroes, and there is no present way of making them earn their living except by making them garrison our forts. The rebels, as the cut on the preceding page shows plainly, have no scruples against arming them. We can safely follow their example.

GENERAL BANKS AT NEW ORLEANS.

THE country has learned with considerable regret that Major-General BENJAMIN F. BUTLER has been removed from the command of the Department of the Gulf. His energy, courage, and hearty hostility to treason in every shape, have won for him the admiration and respect of all loyal men; and the execration in which he is held by our enemies at the South and in Europe proves how thoroughly he has done the work which was set him to do. Whether he was as careful of the probity of his subordinates, and as tender of the feelings of foreign consuls as he should have been, are questions which the Administration can decide better than the public. His removal justifies the belief that they were decided in the negative. Mr. Lincoln doubtless had good reasons for his course; though, as we said, the removal is a source of sorrow to all loyal men who are in earnest in this war.

But if any possible appointment could console the country for the removal of BUTLER, it would be that of NATHANIEL P. BANKS. For no man in the United States possesses a stronger hold of the public confidence than the ex-operative of Waltham. Not that General Banks has ever electrified the country by brilliant flashes of genius, by extraordinary exploits, or unusual triumphs; but that, in whatever station he has been placed, from the beginning of his career as member of the Massachusetts Assembly to the present moment, he has always proved himself equal to his task. Every thing which he has undertaken he has accomplished. A man of unusually clear perceptions, a calm, judicial mind, and dauntless courage; not devoid of passion, as was shown in his magnificent speech at the Astor House before he left New York; but so fair and free from prejudice that Mr. Aiken, of South Carolina, pronounced that he had stood so straight in the Speaker's chair as almost to have leaned to the other side; gifted with such wonderful prescience that as far back as 1858, when the whole country was slumbering in peace, he began to drill the Massachusetts militia for this war; so keenly alive to the truths of the day, and accurately discerning the nature of the contest, that he alone of the leading Republicans wanted to have 600,000 men called out in April, 1861, and scorned the popular notion that we could starve out the South; a statesman of no mean calibre, as even such men as James Buchanan were forced to confess; a soldier in whom M'Clellan could find no fault. Such is the man who now wields power and authority in this country second only to that of Abraham Lincoln.

For it can not be too often repeated that this war must be decided not on the banks of the Potomac, but on the banks of the Mississippi. So long as the rebels hold any portion of the great river it will avail us little to beat their armies in Virginia. Lee, defeated before Richmond, falls back toward Raleigh, and our triumph is barren. He may even fight us, as Davis has boasted, for twenty years on the soil of Virginia, without decisive result, so long as the present boundaries of the Confederacy remain undisturbed. But once let our armies and navy obtain and retain the whole course of the Mississippi, and the hopes of a national existence for the Confederacy is gone. The South went to war with us because the North insisted on girdling slavery, leaving to the slave power Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Missouri. If we can take and hold the Mississippi we shall girdle slavery without those large States—shall confine the institution within the limits of old States where there is little or no new land, and no room for the migratory system of agriculture on which slavery fattens. The South could not afford to accept national existence on these terms. They would realize, as Toombs prophesied, that their country was too small for them and their negroes together, and before five years elapsed, if we recognized their independence, would come on bended knees to Washington, begging to be let out of the trap in which they had got caught.

The possession of the Mississippi River is the key to victory in the war. It now devolves upon General Banks to possess it.

THE LOUNGER.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

SIX volumes of our *Weekly* are now completed, and the seventh begins with so great a multitude of friends that we can not be guilty of letting the New Year pass without a word of acknowledgment. Not that any very sentimental relation exists between you, my good unknown friend, who buy this paper in the extreme West or East or North or South, and the proprietors or the writers; but because, despite all this, a periodical paper has an individual existence, and its readers are inevitably a body, a diocese, toward which the paper feels abstractly indeed, but especially attached.

As becomes every illustrated paper which seeks to entertain the public without offending its prejudices, public questions were not discussed in these columns until a blow aimed at the very heart of the nation left but one commanding interest in the public mind. Then to have tattled amiably about matters for which nobody cared would have been merely idiotic. For if any man said that patriotism was politics he was at heart a traitor. And if any said that he was indifferent, while his country staggered under the assassins' blows, he was a knave or a fool. And *Harper's Weekly* does not solicit the favor of traitors, fools, or knaves.

While our brave boys by thousands and thousands were marching, and camping, and fighting for us in the field, this paper has borne most living witness of their services and their heroism, by a copious and constant picturing of the more striking and interesting places, events, and persons of the war, all along the line from Maine to Missouri. And that the world might know, as it saw them pictured, what they were fighting for, and that they might see that neither they nor the cause were forgotten by us who stay behind, we have constantly set forth the great principles of this war, and so far as we may, in obedience to the first duty of every public teacher in the land, we have sought to elevate and ennoble the public opinion, which is the true government of the country. To that end we have often spoken strongly and sternly. But when good men are losing their lives for us all shall we be mealy-mouthed? Let us at least impress upon our soldiers the fact that they are periling their lives for a nation of men with hearts and souls, not for a heap of mush. What brave soldier would wish to save a pack of miserable cowards who do not dare to call their faith, or their country, or their souls their own? We have not believed in making war with olive branches or any other wooden weapons, but when a desperate assault was made upon the Government, and humanity, and civilization, we have believed, and do still with all our hearts and souls believe, that the true way to treat it was to make the enemy feel the overwhelming power of that Government and civilization, wherever an honorable and humane grasp could seize him, and be shaken until he were subdued even if it were unto death. And if any adviser thinks with a smile that it would be hard to do, we believe in trying, and not in submitting to an infamous foe until we have strained every nerve. The trial may indeed not save life, but it will save honor.

To have been called "Abolitionist" is not a very overpowering blow. The time for a visionary position of abstract hostility to slavery and practical support of it has utterly gone. Practically to favor slavery in this country at this time is to aid the destruction of the Government and invite anarchy. The question whether the friends or the foes of slavery caused the war is obsolete. Every man may think of it as he will. But we all know that except for slavery there would have been no war. And we can have no peace with it hereafter. It must conquer as the dominant interest of the Government, or be absolutely conquered.

It is certainly profoundly gratifying to us, as it is a most honorable and significant fact for the country, that the circulation of *Harper's Weekly* during this melancholy time has been steadily increasing. It has not been partisan, and never will be. It has been as patriotic as it could be, and, by God's grace, will never be otherwise. The Lounger believes that the New Year will be happy, and he salutes all his friends with the best wishes.

HOLY-TIME.

THE holiday season probably never dawned upon so many mourning households. But the grief upon which it shines is not dead and hopeless, for the cause of the sorrow and the association of the holy-time blend in a light that transfigures the memory of the departed. To have died nobly is hardly less than to have lived well. For indeed they can hardly be said to do the one who have not done the other. And the thousands of young and brave and beautiful whose voices shall mingle no longer in our solemn Christmas hymns and happy New-Year greetings, have given a more serious sweetness to each festival by the memory of their heroic sacrifice.

A generous nation will not stand by the graves which are covered with a year's grass, or are just closed, or just opening, and betray those who are laid in them. Those young lives were not poured out that anarchy may prevail. Every one of them has pledged us all more closely to the great object to which they were devoted. From the first slain in Baltimore, from Ellsworth and Winthrop and Greble, on to the last noble heart stilled in battle, each is a link in the chain that holds us all fast to our country. Our dimmed eyes are washed with their blood, so that we who were blind now see. Slowly, and, in how many cases, reluctantly, our minds have come to know that we must conquer or be conquered, and that there is and can be no peace but the annihilation of the cause of war.

And which of these brave youth of ours, seeing as they now do with perfect vision the work they have wrought, would regret the early ending of their mortal lives, or even the sharp, sudden pang it sent to the sister, or brother, or wife, or maid who loved them, or the mother's heart who bore them? For those who remain is the gain or the loss greater? Is the mother of Joseph Warren, of Nathan Hale, pitied by any man? The mother of Colonel Baker died lately in Illinois. How well she knew that her son ascended, not went down, from the floor of the Senate to the field at Ball's Bluff!

But these are the thoughts that raise our human hearts into heavenly serenity after the bitter blow has a little passed. In this friendly and sacred season the old habit of the loving voice and the beloved face and form returns and claims its own. The season is domestic. The home asks for its unbroken circle, and its wistful eyes seek those whose smile should have outlasted ours. How far the shadow this year falls! Yet, O aching hearts! O tearful eyes! for you the poet sings:

"With trembling fingers did we weave
The holly round the Christmas hearth;
A rainy cloud possessed the earth,
And sadly fell our Christmas-eve.

"At our old pastimes in the hall
We gambol'd, making vain pretense
Of gladness, with an awful sense
Of one mute shadow watching all.

* * * * * *

"We ceased: a gentler feeling crept
Upon us: surely rest is meet.
'They rest,' we said; 'their sleep is sweet;'
And silence followed and we wept.

"Our voices took a higher range;
Once more we sang, 'They do not die,
Nor lose their mortal sympathy,
Nor change to us, although they change.

"'Rapt from the fickle and the frail,
With gathered power, yet the same,
Pierces the keen seraphic flame
From orb to orb, from veil to veil.'

"Rise, happy morn! rise, holy morn!
Draw forth the cheerful day from night:
O Father, touch the east, and light
The light that shone when Hope was born."

UNIVERSAL KNOWLEDGE.

IT is astonishing to observe how much Everybody knows. If only Everybody's advice had been followed the war would have been over long ago. If you seat yourself in a car for a little journey, you can not but hear the conversation before you and behind you, and Everybody knows every thing to that degree that it is incomprehensible why we have not long ago done all that we long ago undertook to do. The movements of the army especially, and the councils of the Government, are revealed in detail to Everybody—while poor Nobody evidently knows nothing about them.

It makes no difference that the knowledge of various people is entirely at variance—that both can not by any possibility be true. They insist upon their asseverations with refreshing dogmatism, entirely disregarding the counter assertion. "I know!" says Paul; and "I know!" retorts Peter; and apparently one has just as good reason as the other. One man goes to Washington and sees the documents, and returns and tells you just how it was. His neighbor goes to Washington and talks with members of the Government, and he tells you upon his return that it was all precisely the other way.

Then the entirely authentic private intelligence! After Antietam it was said that Sigel had gone up on the Virginia side to cut off Lee. "No, no!" said the next man; "impossible. Sigel has not ten thousand men." "But I assure you," rejoins the first, "my correspondent in Washington writes me so, explicitly." The news of the cutting-off was waited for patiently, but it has not yet arrived.

After the disastrous days of July upon the Peninsula one friend met another, "So Buell is in Baltimore with fifty thousand men on his way to Fort Monroe!" "Impossible." "Oh, but I assure you my correspondent in Baltimore, whose business is to get the news, wrote it to me yesterday." "Indeed."—But Buell has not yet arrived.

Statements of every kind can be taken only at the most alarming discount. We began with the most prodigious fabrications, but at the close of the second year of them our appetites are unsated. During the Fredericksburg days came the detailed news of Banks ascending the Chowan and forming divisions of his force, etc., etc. It was all gravely published and devoured. Yet if common-sense and memory could have had a chance, we should have reflected that, as General Banks sailed in ocean steamers, and as the Chowan is a shallow puddle or brook, the chances were terribly against the truth of the story, and entirely in favor of its being a desperate lie to frighten the enemy.

The only permanent fact in the matter is that we all dogmatize furiously upon pure falsehood or the most inadequate reports. Any man who wishes to know will neither believe his neighbor's correspondents nor the newspaper telegrams, but wait patiently until enough time has elapsed to verify all statements. The main fact of a battle may be correct, but whether it were a victory or defeat we can not know, however lustily it may be asserted.

And you, good friend, whose dogged insistence the other morning upon the melancholy and alarming fact that peremptory orders had been issued to all our Generals to burn up all rivers in their way has served the Lounger for a text, do you know that he has discovered your name? It is Legion, and he publishes it to warn his countrymen.

WHINING.

THAT we should be indignant with other people for doing well and being well paid for doing what we can not do at all is not surprising, however humiliating it may be. But that we should add a querulous complaint that such people do not always agree with us in opinion, and even dare to say so, is simply silly. It is surely nobody's fault that he can not deliver a lecture, for instance, with such success as to be often solicited to speak; but to whine that other people can, and that they are actually paid for it, and still further, that they say what they think, is the most amusing snivel that the press affords.

There is great discomposure, upon the part of those who do not believe the principles of the Declaration of Independence, that most of the popular Lyceum lecturers in the country do. At an utter loss how to attack them for such temerity, the most convenient thrust has hitherto been that they were "itinerants." But to this enormity is now added that they are "strollers," "radicals," "nomadic," "reformers," etc., etc.; and if you go to hear them you may be outraged by hearing something with which you do not agree.

When this sort of remark is made by a newspaper it may be likened unto a gun which kicks the marksman over. For what is a newspaper but a daily lecture from the point of view of the editor? If a man goes to hear a lecture from Mr. Beecher he knows exactly to what he exposes himself, as when he buys a copy of the *Tribune* or of the *Journal of Commerce*. To complain that he heard certain opinions from Mr. Beecher, or that he found in the *Journal of Commerce* sentiments precisely the reverse of those of the lecture, would be sure to elicit only the amused answer, "Why, of course; what did you expect?" To hear an editor who writes a lecture which is sold in many copies for several cents each, and read by the audience, abusing an orator who writes a lecture, which he sells in the lump for a certain sum to an audience which hears it read or spoken by the author, is a striking case of pot and kettle. The orator no more insults any one of his audience because he says what that one does not like, than a loyal editor insults a rebel because he prints an editorial unsavory to the rebellious palate. In like manner when we buy certain papers among ourselves we know what to expect, and we are zanies if we whimper that they talk treason.

It seems not to be understood by those who complain of lecturers as "radicals," that the people who buy tickets to a course of Lyceum lectures are aware of the names and views of the speakers and of the topics they are to treat. The tickets are bought with the full knowledge that the tendency of most all of the speakers is toward the conservatism of Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton, and Adams, and directly away from that of Vallandigham and Jeff Davis. If any conservative of the Vallandigham-Davis school goes to the lecture, why should he squirm? Would he complain if he bought the *Evening Post*? Is there any deception? Is it not a fair bargain? Does he pay twenty-five cents to hear Wendell Phillips chant the praises of the patriarchal institution, or Bishop Clark eulogize Strauss, or Mr. Milburn extol the Yankees? Or has he made up his mind that he is insulted whenever he hears a forcible dissent from his own political, or religious, or philosophical doctrine? If he has, he is a subject for Mr. Barnum, and should be contemplated in a glass case.

Of course no reader is ignorant that the point of the objection lies beneath all this petulance. It is simply the knowledge that the Lyceum is both an educator and an indicator; and that when the speakers most sought from one end of the country to another utterly loathe the anarchical spirit which now calls itself "Conservatism," it is a sign that the people are so true at heart as to make political charlatans and demagogues despair.

A REPLY TO A WESTERN FRIEND.

A CORRESPONDENT in Wisconsin writes to the Lounger: "You make a list of Conservatives, Dickinson, M'Carthy, Randall, Everett, Holt, Johnson, Brownlow, and Hamilton, and set them against Wood, Vallandigham, Rynders, Davis, Brooks, Toombs, Van Buren, Wigfall, Spratt, Keitt, and Rhett. You make a case, and decide it. Perhaps many good men will agree with you. But do you think the question stated with common honesty? Now let *me* make a case, and ask you to decide it. I choose to name as the representatives of the Conservative element of the country Seymour, Bronson, O'Conor, Washington Hunt, Ira Harris, Thurlow Weed, Robert C. Winthrop, Senators Browning, Cowan, Collamer, General M'Clellan, and that sort of folks; and, as their opposites, Ben Wade, Senators Chandler, Sumner, and Hale, Lovejoy, Beecher, Greeley, & Co.; and I sincerely but earnestly ask you to state frankly, as between them, where you stand."

The question is as simple as the answer shall be. That sort of folks would be doubtless surprised to find themselves classed together. Judge Collamer and Judge Harris, for instance, have no more sympathy with Mr. O'Conor's views of our general politics, and of this rebellion, than they have with Yancey's. And inasmuch as Messrs. Wood, Vallandigham, Rynders, Brooks, and Van Buren were the most ardent and conspicuous of Governor Seymour's advocates in the late election, speaking with him and for him, it is perfectly clear that their Conservatism can not radically differ from his, unless they misunderstand each other; and as the Lounger has already often enough repudiated the least sympathy with Messrs. Wood, Rynders, and Van Buren, why should his correspondent be in any doubt as to his equal want of sympathy with the men with whom they act, and of whom they are political bedfellows?

The Lounger still, and "honestly," prefers the conservatism of Mr. Everett to that of Governor Seymour—of Mr. Dickinson to that of Fernando Wood—of Andrew Johnson to that of John Van Buren. And as he believes that the views of Messrs. Everett, Johnson, Brownlow, Holt, and Dickinson, in regard to the scope of this war and the true policy of its conduct, do not differ substantially, however they may differ in detail, from those of Wade, Beecher, and the others, he is glad to call himself a Conservative of that school and not of the other.

—And might he not put it to his "good-natured" friend whether the case *he* makes is stated with any more "honesty" than the Lounger's? Of course extreme men must always be named to indicate tendencies. Senator Harris certainly does not agree in all points with Senator Wade, for instance. But does the "good-natured" man at the West "honestly" believe that, upon the whole, Judge Harris does not agree with Senator Wade more than with Governor Seymour and his friends? The Conservative in this country is the man who would preserve the *spirit* as well as the *form* of the Government. And it is because the party at this moment which especially claims to be conservative seems to the Lounger to be entirely careless of that spirit that he denies its right to the name.

HUMORS OF THE DAY.

A GENTLEMAN recently visited the Campana Museum, for which the French Government gave $1,000,000. Every object he saw made him cry, "Admirable! first-rate!" One of the keepers saw him, and was so pleased to see at last somebody delighted with the museum, that he went up to him and said, "You are familiar with archæology, I see, Sir; doubtless an antiquary from Heidelberg, or Vienna, or Jena?" "No, Sir; but my wife, what's dead and gone, used to sell butter in just such pots as them there." The keeper vanished, and now speaks to nobody, until after a regular introduction.

A Bangor paper says that a pig lately walked into a tailor's shop there, and before he was noticed by the proprietor made his way toward the cutting board—attracted, doubtless, by the smell of cabbage in that locality.

A gentleman, one evening, was seated near a lovely woman, when the company around him were proposing conundrums to each other. Turning to his companion, he said, "Why is a lady unlike a mirror?" She "gave it up." "Because," said the rude fellow, "a mirror reflects without speaking, a lady speaks without reflecting." "And why are you unlike a mirror?" asked the lady. He could not tell. "Because a mirror is smooth and polished, and you are rough and unpolished." The gentleman owned there was one lady who did not speak without both reflecting and casting reflections.

"The boy at the head of the class will state what were the Dark Ages of the world." Boy hesitates. "Next. Master Biggs, can you tell me what the Dark Ages were?" "I guess they were the ages before spectacles were invented." "Go to your seats."

"So you wouldn't take me to be twenty!" said a rich heiress to an Irish gentleman, while dancing the polka. "What would you take me for, then?"

"For better or worse," replied the son of the Emerald Isle.

"You've destroyed my peace of mind, Betsy," said a desponding lover to a truant lass.

"It can't do you much harm, John, for 'twas an amazing small piece you had, any way," was the quick reply.

"Sir, I will make you feel the arrows of my resentment."

"Ah, Miss, why should I fear your arrows when you never had a beau?"

There are two kinds of cats—one with nine lives, the other with nine tails; the former always fall upon their own feet, the latter upon other's backs.

At a wedding recently, when the officiating priest put to the lady the question, "Wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband?" she dropped the prettiest courtesy, and with a modesty which lent her beauty an additional grace, replied, "If you please."

"I am an unlucky man, gentlemen, exclaimed a poor fellow. "If I were to seize Time by the forelock I do believe it would come right out, and leave him as bare as a barber's block."

"It is all very pretty talk," said a recently married old bachelor, who had just finished reading an essay on the "Culture of Women," just as a heavy milliner's bill was presented to him—"'tis all very pretty this cultivation of women; but such a charge as this for bonnets is rather a heavy top-dressing—in my judgment."

There are ties which should never be severed, as the ill-used wife said when she found her brute of a husband hanging in the hay-loft.

A celebrated Parisian dandy was ordered by his physicians to follow a course of sea-bathing at Dieppe. Arrived at that delightful town, he ordered a machine and attend[illegible] and went boldly into the water. He plunged in bravely, but in an instant after came up puffing and blowing. "Francis," said he, "the sea smells detestably; it will poison me. Throw a little eau de Cologne into the water, or I shall be suffocated!"

"Say, Cæsar Augustus, why am your legs like an organ-grinder?" "Don't know, Mr. Sugarloaf; why is they?" "'Cos they carry a monkey about the streets."

They tell the story of a young lady of temperate habits who was advised by her physician to take ale to fatten her up. She bought a quart bottle of the article, and drank a tea-spoonful twice a day in a tumbler of water; but finding that she was fattening too rapidly, reduced the dose one half, and thus kept within bounds.

A gentleman having engaged a bricklayer to make some repairs in his cellar, ordered the ale to be removed before the bricklayer commenced his work. "Oh, I'm not afraid of a barrel of ale, Sir," said the man. "I presume not," said the gentleman; "but I think a barrel of ale would run at your approach."

"Josh, does the sun ever rise in the West?" "Never." "Never?" "Never!" "You don't say so! Well, you won't get me to emigrate to the West, if it's always night there. I've a cousin who is ever boasting how pleasant it is in that region, but it must be all moonshine."

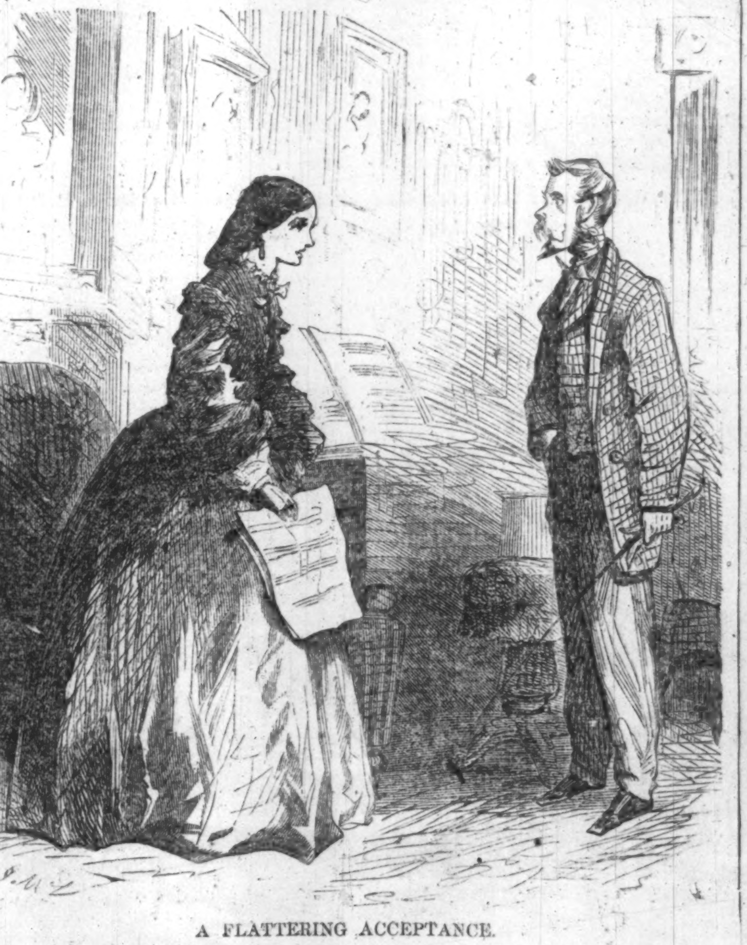
Mrs. Partington is of opinion that Mount Vesuvius should take sarsaparilla to cure itself of eruptions. The old lady thinks it has been vomiting so long nothing else would stay on its stomach.

It is but an ill-filled mind that is filled with other people's thoughts.

DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCE.

CONGRESS.

ON Tuesday, December 23, in the Senate, the annual report of the Secretary of the Interior was received, also the report of Hon. Reverdy Johnson on General Butler's administration of affairs at New Orleans. Senator Lane, of Kansas, gave notice of a bill to authorize the raising of a force of two hundred regiments of negro soldiers. Senator Saulsbury's resolution in reference to the alleged sending of Maryland troops into Delaware at the last election was discussed for some time, but no final disposition was made of it. The Committee on the Conduct of the War presented their report on the recent battle at Fredericksburg. The Bankrupt bill was then taken up, and its consideration occupied the remainder of the open session. An executive session was held, after which the Senate, in accordance with the resolution adopted by the House on Monday, adjourned to meet on the 5th of January, 1863. ——In the House, Mr. Pendleton, of Ohio, moved to have placed on the Journal the entire protest of the thirty-six members against the President's suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus*, but the House negatived the motion by 74 against 20. The Ways and Means Committee's bill providing for the executive and judicial expenses for the year ending with June, 1864, was reported and made the special order for the 5th of January, 1863. The Postal Committee also reported a bill, which was passed, authorizing the Postmaster-General to establish a postal money order system. The bill relative to the Sioux and Dacotah Indians was taken up in Committee on the Whole; but when the time for taking a vote arrived there was not a quorum present, and the subject was laid over. The negro question was then discussed for some time, after which the House adjourned, to meet on the 5th of January, 1863.



A FLATTERING ACCEPTANCE.

LITTLE BOTTLES.—"Ah! Miss Laura, you will favaw me with your delightful company in a sleigh-ride—ah! I suppose—of course—you know!"

MISS LAURA.—"Bottles, certainly! Right off—now—as soon as you please. Take a sleigh-ride *with you or any other man!*"

REPORT ON THE BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG.

The Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War reported, on 23d, in answer to a Senate resolution of the 18th inst. calling on that committee to inquire into the facts relating to the recent battle at Fredericksburg, Virginia, and particularly as to what officer or officers are responsible for the assault, that they had proceeded to the head-quarters of the Army of the Potomac and taken the depositions of Major-Generals Burnside, Sumner, Franklin, and Hooker, and Brigadier-Generals Woodbury and Haupt, and, on their return to Washington, those of Major-General Halleck and Brigadier-General Meigs. All the facts relating to the movements of the army under General Burnside, the forwarding of pontoons and supplies, the recent battle at Fredericksburg, are so fully and clearly stated in the depositions submitted that the committee report the testimony without comment. The testimony shows that General Burnside made the attack on his own responsibility, but that General Halleck is mainly answerable for the non-arrival of the pontoons at Falmouth till it was too late to cross safely.

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT.

"EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, *Dec.* 22, 1862.

"*To the Army of the Potomac:*

"I have just read your Commanding General's preliminary report of the battle of Fredericksburg. Although you were not successful, the attempt was not an error, nor the failure other than an accident. The courage with which you, in an open field, maintained the contest against an intrenched foe, and the consummate skill and success with which you crossed and recrossed the river in the face of the enemy, show that you possess all the qualities of a great army which will yet give victory to the cause of the country and of popular government. Condoling with the mourners for the dead and sympathizing with the severely wounded, I congratulate you that the number of both is comparatively so small. I tender to you, officers and soldiers, the thanks of the nation.

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

ANOTHER REBEL RAID.

On Saturday, 27th ult., the rebels made a dashing attack with cavalry and artillery in front of Dumfries. The place was held by the Fifth, Seventh, and Sixty-sixth Ohio Volunteers, with a section of a battery. Being worsted at this point, after a brief contest, the rebels pushed on to Occoquan, where they met Colonel Candy's command, and had another brush with them. Considerable loss occurred on both sides, and the enemy again made for Anandale, by way of Bull Run and Wolf Run, and thence toward Vienna, which place they passed through at midnight. Meantime General Geary hastened to intercept them, and came up with them between Dumfries and Bull Run, chasing them southward. They seized the telegraph office at Burke's Station and burned the bridge at Acotink. The enemy do not appear to have gained any thing by this bold raid except a few sutler's wagons and some ambulances which they picked up on the way. They captured one gun at Dumfries, but were compelled to abandon it. They were reported to be 4000 strong, but this is probably an overestimate.

WINCHESTER REOCCUPIED.

The news from the Shenandoah Valley represents that the rebels have evacuated Winchester and have gone toward Staunton, destroying the railroad as they went. The destitution at Winchester is reported as fearful. General Jones, with 2500 rebels, had occupied it for some time past; but the Union troops, under Colonel K[illegible] advanced from Romney on Christmas morning and took possession of the town.

A CALIFORNIA STEAMER CAUGHT BY THE "ALABAMA."

On the 7th December the p[illegible]e *Alabama* came across the *Ariel*, bound from New York to Aspinwall, off the coast of Cuba, and brought her to by sending a 68-pound shot through her foremast. Captain Semmes then took off her captain, and held him a prisoner for three days, expressing his determination at the same time to land the passengers either at some point on the island of Cuba or St. Domingo, and then to destroy the vessel. At the earnest remonstrance of Captain Jones, in behalf of the women and children on board, however, he consented to let her proceed. The *Alabama* started in pursuit of the *Champion*, then on her return voyage to New York, but failed to find her. Captain Jones carried the *Ariel* safe into Aspinwall, and arrived at this port on 28th, but brought no gold. With the fear of the *Alabama* before his eyes, he wisely left the treasure at Aspinwall.

ANOTHER PRIVATEER AFLOAT.

By advices from Havana, it appears that the steamer *Florida*, otherwise and better known as the *Oreto*, has succeeded in escaping from Mobile, with a crew of one hundred men, having run the gauntlet of the blockade in the darkness of the night.

A ROAR FROM JEFF DAVIS.

Jefferson Davis has issued a violent retaliatory proclamation to the emancipation proclamation of Mr. Lincoln, denouncing the course of General Butler in New Orleans in vehement terms, and dooming him and all the officers in his command to death by the halter, when they are caught. Jeff knew, when he issued his proclamation, that Butler had been removed.

A NEW WAY TO COLLECT OLD DEBTS.

The firm of John N. Cocke & Co., in Portsmouth, Virginia, having refused to pay their debts to Northern citizens, on the ground that a law of the Confederate States has released and discharged them from all obligations to Northern creditors, General Viele has issued a proclamation, informing said firm that their excuse for refusal to pay is a treasonable sham, and that if they do not pay up a sufficient amount of their property will be seized and sold to discharge the debt.

DESTRUCTION OF THE "CAIRO."

The Union gun-boat *Cairo* has been destroyed in the Yazoo River by the explosion of a rebel torpedo. A large rent was made in her bottom, and she began to fill rapidly. The crew, however, got all safe ashore before she went down, although with some difficulty. Other torpedoes, in the shape of ordinary demijohns filled with combustibles, were discovered by our fleet, and taken up without doing any mischief.

FOREIGN NEWS.

ENGLAND.

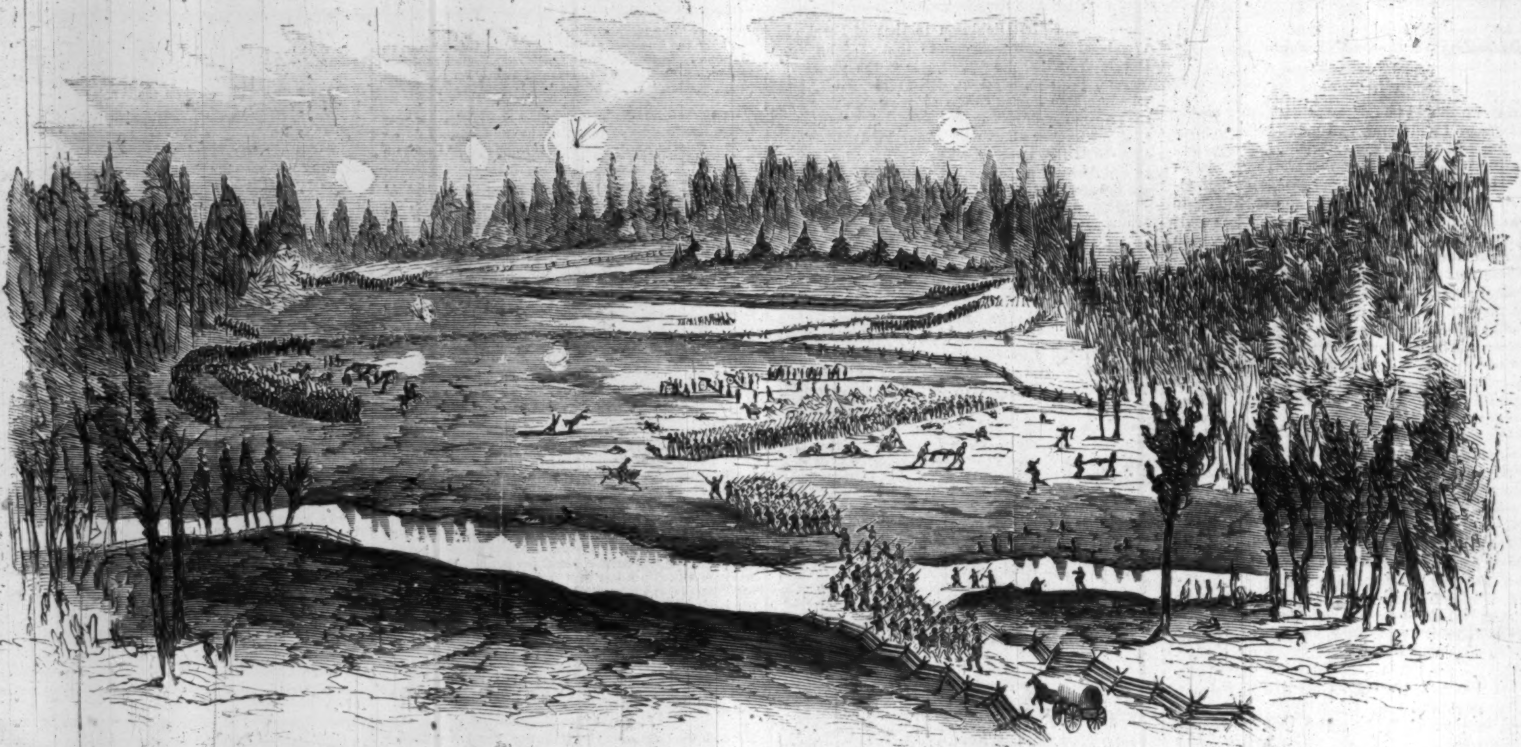
THE ATLANTIC TELEGRAPH AGAIN.

THE Atlantic Telegraph Company has held a very encouraging meeting in London, at which the plan for raising £600,000 sterling for the purpose of laying a new cable was submitted to the assemblage. £75,000 sterling had been subscribed. The new capital stock will be issued in shares of the value of £5 sterling each.

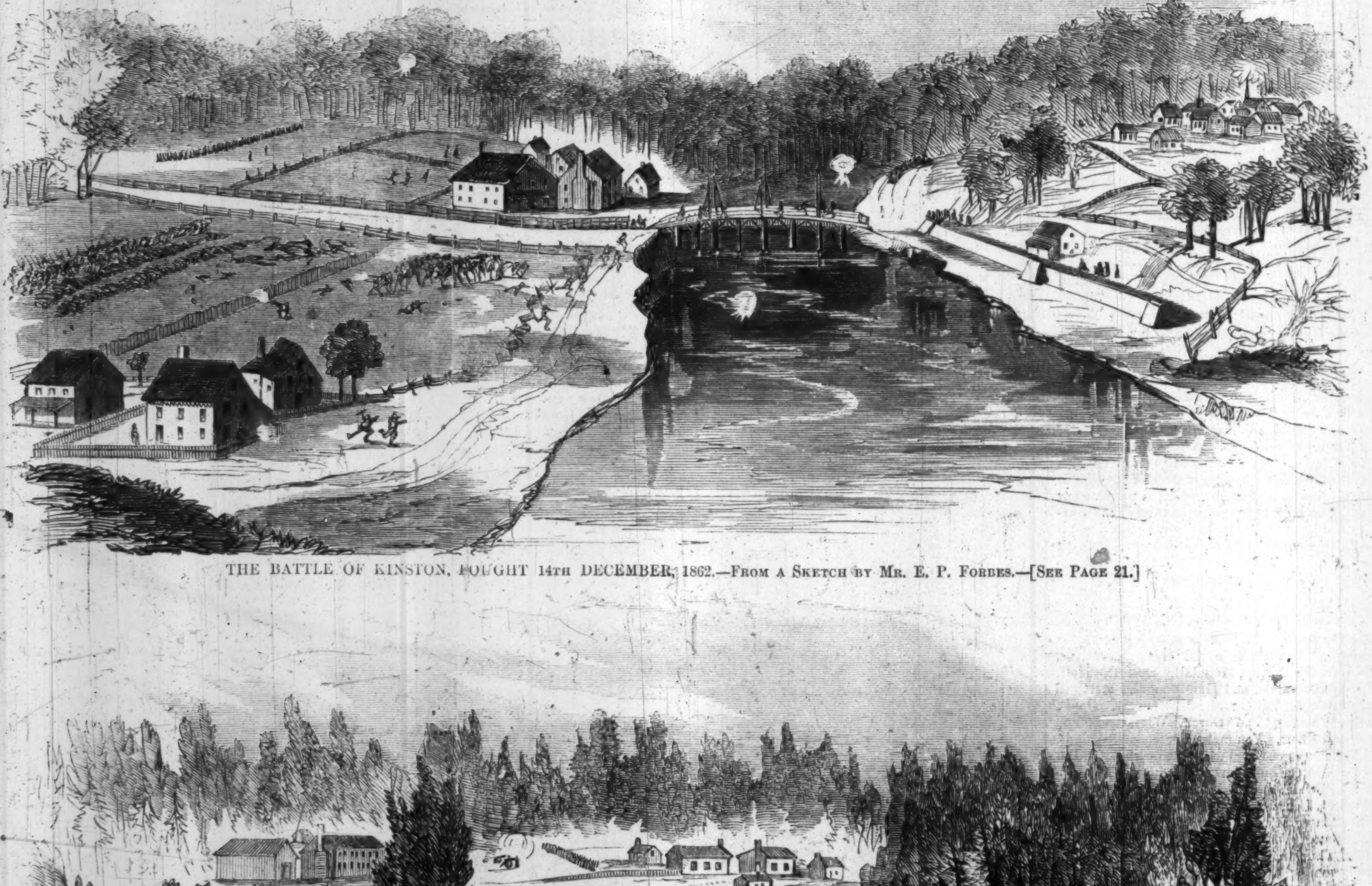
GREECE.

A PORTUGUESE KING.

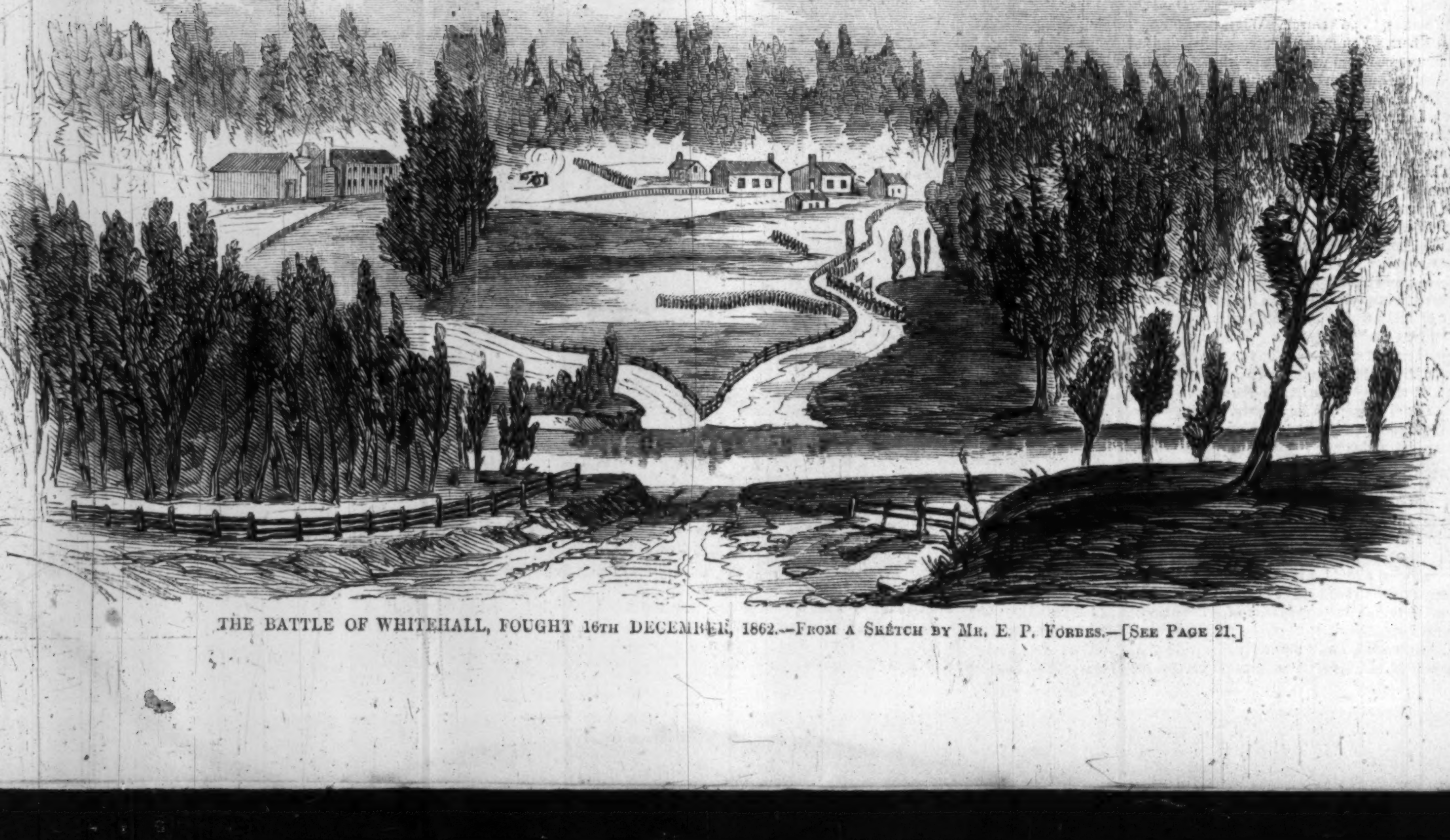
The British Government has agreed with the other protecting Powers to respect the protocol by which Prince Alfred is prevented from accepting the throne of Greece; this appears to have given satisfaction to the French Government and the Cabinet of Russia. The three Powers have agreed to recommend to the Greeks as their ruler Ferdinand, king consort of Portugal, father of the present king of that country. Ferdinand acted as Regent of Portugal during the minority of his son. He is a duke of the royal house of Saxony, forty-six years of age, and very popular.



THE BATTLE OF GOLDSBOROUGH, FOUGHT 17TH DECEMBER, 1862.—FROM A SKETCH BY MR. E. P. FORBES.—[SEE PAGE 21.]



THE BATTLE OF KINSTON, FOUGHT 14TH DECEMBER, 1862.—FROM A SKETCH BY MR. E. P. FORBES.—[SEE PAGE 21.]



THE BATTLE OF WHITEHALL, FOUGHT 16TH DECEMBER, 1862.—FROM A SKETCH BY MR. E. P. FORBES.—[SEE PAGE 21.]

BRIGADIER-GENERAL FOSTER, U.S.A.

ON this page we publish a portrait of BRIGADIER-GENERAL J. G. FOSTER, U.S.A., the commander of the recent successful expedition to Goldsborough, North Carolina.

The family of John G. Foster has ever been distinguished for its patriotism and valor. His grandfather, in company with the gallant Benjamin Pierce (father of ex-President Pierce), then quite young, was among the first to join the Massachusetts line in the war of the Revolution, and was often commended for his noble conduct on the field of battle. His father, Major Perley Foster, was in active service during the war of 1812, and was in the battle of Plattsburg, on Lake Champlain. The subject of our sketch was born in Whitefield, New Hampshire, May 27, 1823, from which place his family moved to Nashua when he was eight years of age. He early evinced a passionate love for the profession of arms, and formed and commanded a "juvenile artillery company." In 1842 he entered West Point, where he graduated with distinguished honors in his class, in 1846, as Brevet Second Lieutenant in the corps of Engineers. In January, 1847, he was ordered to Mexico with General Scott, as a Lieutenant in a company of sappers and miners, and was in all the engagements from "Vera Cruz" to "Molino del Rey." At the latter place he was severely wounded while leading a division of the storming party in the deadly assault on "Casa Mata," where two-thirds of the entire command were cut down, and where he narrowly escaped death from the Mexican bayonet by the memorable charge of the gallant Cadwalader. For his gallant conduct in Mexico he received three brevets—the first at Contreras, the second at Churubusco, and the last at Molino del Rey, where he was brevetted as Captain.

The severity of his wound was such that amputation was thought to be necessary, as a large escopet ball had struck him below the knee, in front, fracturing the bone, and lodging beneath the skin on the opposite side; but he stoutly persisted in retaining his limb, which, though greatly injured, is still sufficient to enable him to do active service. After recovering somewhat from his injuries, he was ordered to Fort Carroll (Baltimore); from thence to Washington City, in Coast Survey Office.

From this position he was sent to West Point as Assistant-Professor in Engineering, and subsequently to the Government works on Sandy Hook. In 1859 he was ordered to Charleston, South Carolina, as Engineer in charge of the forts in Charleston harbor and vicinity, to repair and complete the same.

After the evacuation of Fort Moultrie by Major Anderson, Captain Foster spiked the guns, burned the carriages, and blew up the flag-staff. When the fort was taken possession of by the South Carolina troops he was allowed to make a peaceable departure for Fort Sumter, in a boat, with the laborers under his direction.

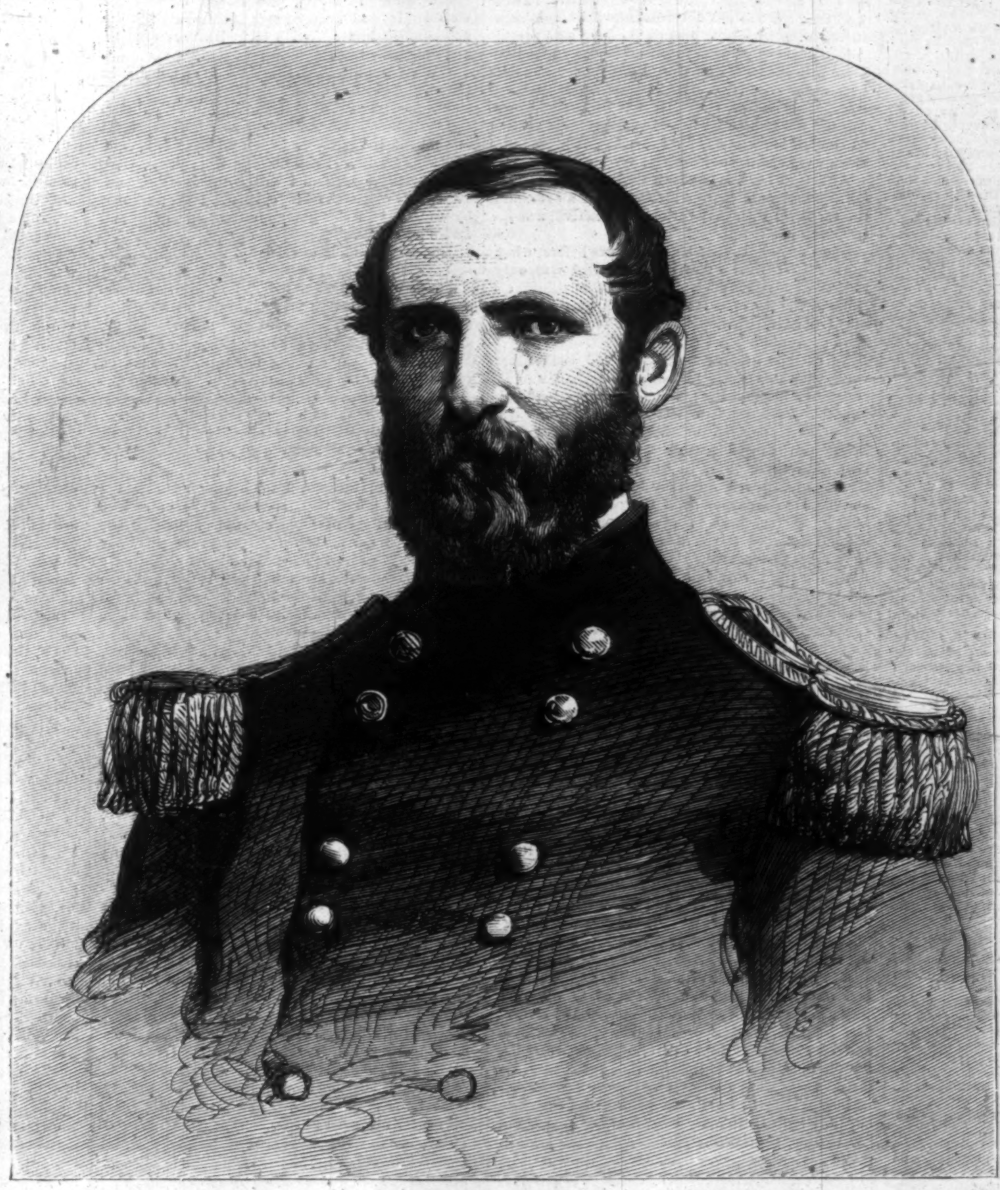
After the surrender of Fort Sumter Captain Foster tendered his services to Government. He was employed for a time in superintending the construction of the great fort on Sandy Hook, but was soon ordered into active service in the army of the Potomac, with the rank of Brigadier-General of Volunteers. Burnside secured him for his expedition; and at the fight on Roanoke Island Foster led our troops, and really won the day. He subsequently distinguished himself at Newbern and at the bombardment of Fort Macon. When Burnside was ordered to the support of M'Clellan, Foster was left in command in North Carolina. He has just returned from a highly successful expedition to Goldsborough, North Carolina, where he burned bridges, and destroyed the main railroad track to the South.

Of this expedition we are enabled, through the politeness of an amateur correspondent, to publish on the preceding page three pictures, representing respectively the BATTLES OF KINSTON, WHITEHALL, and GOLDSBOROUGH. We condense the following accounts of these engagements from the *Herald* correspondence:

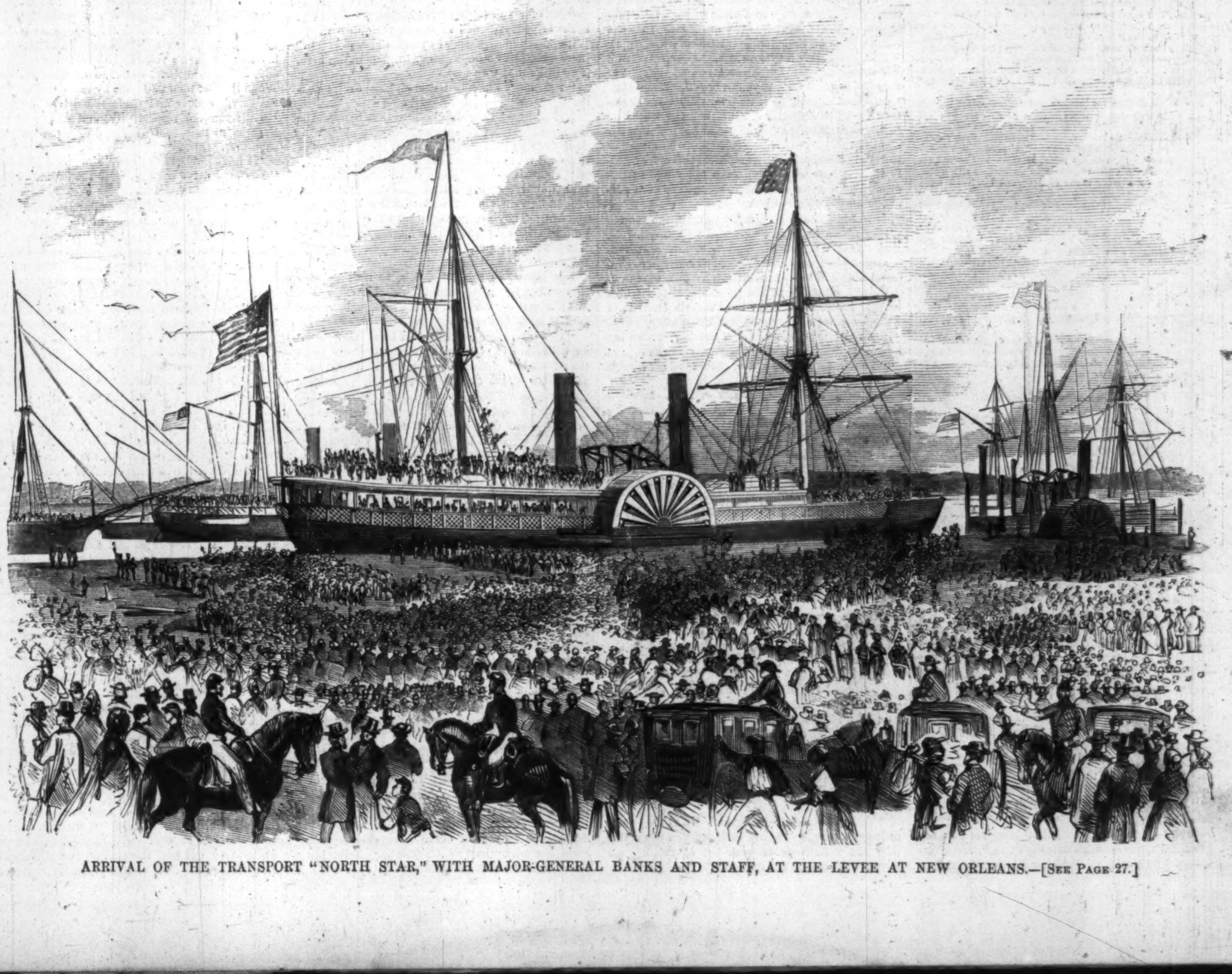
BATTLE OF KINSTON.

This battle was fought December 14. Early in the morning, when our troops commenced the advance, the enemy was met near Kinston.

The Ninth New Jersey advanced slowly down the road, and then into the woods on either side. These skirmishers stood their ground until their entire stock of ammunition was exhausted, when the Eighty-fifth Pennsylvania



BRIGADIER-GENERAL J. G. FOSTER.—[PHOTOGRAPHED BY BRADY.]



ARRIVAL OF THE TRANSPORT "NORTH STAR," WITH MAJOR-GENERAL BANKS AND STAFF, AT THE LEVEE AT NEW ORLEANS.—[SEE PAGE 27.]

was ordered up to support the Ninth. They did their duty well. This was about ten o'clock. The enemy having brought his artillery into action, we returned a similar and much more effective fire from Captain Morrison's battery, of the Third New York artillery, the latter being posted in a small field, on a rise of ground, within 800 yards of the enemy. Soon after Captains Schenck's and Janey's batteries were brought into play, from different and the best available positions on either side of the road. The engagement having become more general, Brigadier-General Wessell's brigade was ordered up. It comprised the 85th, 101st, and 103d Pennsylvania, and the 88th, 92d, and 96th New York. After the 45th, 17th, and 23d Massachusetts regiments had been ordered up General Wessell, who was on the field, ordered the execution of a flank movement on the enemy's battery. So it was that while a small portion of this force operated to the left, the remainder moved through a woods to the right, also flanking a swamp, and got a position on the line of an open field that enabled our men to play upon the enemy with intense effect and remarkable execution. The Ninth New Jersey, after sustaining a terrific fire from the enemy, obtained a position close to the bridge, being handsomely supported by the 17th Massachusetts; and then it was that we found ourselves almost on the bank of the Neuse River, with a long fortification on the opposite side. This fortification, 175 feet long, thoroughly commanded all the approaches to the bridge. In it and supporting it were three companies of light artillery, four companies of heavy artillery, two North Carolina regiments, the 2d, 17th, 18th, and 23d South Carolina regiments, a portion of the 3d North Carolina cavalry, part of Major Nethercote's battalion, and the Raleigh detachment, under command of Colonel Molett, who was wounded in the leg—in all about 6000 strong.

After a sharp engagement for over three hours we drove the enemy from his intrenchments and got possession of the bridge. The latter was fired in three places; but the Ninth New Jersey, a few of the Third New York artillery, and the Provost Marshal, Major Franklin, advanced in haste and put out the flames before the fire had done any material injury. Immediately our advance regiments crossed, when the Tenth Connecticut advanced upon the enemy and drove him over the fields, forcing him to retreat to the further end of the town.

BATTLE OF WHITEHALL.

This was fought on 16th. As our troops approached the town an open space revealed our approach to the enemy, the latter being concealed in a thick woods on the opposite side of the river. Heavy skirmishing immediately ensued between the Ninth New Jersey and three regiments of rebels. Major Garrard, who was in advance of the column, with three pieces of artillery and a squadron of cavalry, passed over a high hill behind the skirmishers, in full sight of the enemy, until he got to the left of those in action, and then opened with his artillery. In a few minutes other artillery came up, when the Major ceased firing. Although his cavalry force was in a position of great exposure, under a heavy fire for quite a while, still the loss was quite trifling. The battle lasted for over three hours. The enemy operated against us with a force of about five or six thousand infantry and three batteries of artillery. The Ninth New Jersey Volunteers, General Wessel's brigade, and a couple of Massachusetts regiments, were engaged in the fight. A few other regiments were brought under fire.

BATTLE OF GOLDSBOROUGH.

Thus General Foster made his way to his destination, which was Goldsborough. On December 17 he found the enemy there, and opened on him with shell. For a very short space of time the rebels stood their ground; but so accurately did we get the range of their position, rapidly throwing in the shells, that the enemy broke front and line, and commenced a precipitate retreat across the river on the railroad bridge. We kept up our firing with considerable rapidity, and by that means cut off the retreat of two rebel regiments, who fell back into thick woods on the other side of the railroad.

Colonel Ledley then moved a battery to within less than half a mile of the enemy's position. The Ninth New Jersey was sent to support the battery across an open field and afterward beyond it, until the regiment got close to the right of the railroad bridge, and a short distance from the enemy and the river. While these operations were being carried out, the Seventeenth Massachusetts, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Fellows, moved to the left, into the woods, waded through a mill stream, and came out on the railroad line directly in front of the enemy.

By this time, and while the Seventeenth was slowly advancing, the enemy commenced a rapid fire of shot and shell from a battery concealed in the woods across the river, and to the left of the bridge, looking from our position, as also from their iron-clad railroad car, occupying a position on the other side of the river, close to the entrance to the bridge. At this point they also had sharp-shooters, who tried hard, but did not well succeed in picking off our men.

The object of General Foster's penetrating so far inland being to destroy this railroad bridge, he now gave orders to have it burned. Colonel Hickman, who got the order, called for volunteers to carry into effect the General's desire. Many volunteered from the Seventeenth Massachusetts and Ninth New Jersey regiments, so the Colonel selected some from each regiment to go and do the work. Several advances were made to fire; but our men were driven back.

Finally, Lieutenant Graham, of the rocket battery, and now acting aid to Colonel Hickman, and William C. Semons, a private in the Ninth New Jersey, advanced under the enemy's heavy firing, when Lieutenant Graham got near enough to and did fire the bridge.

As soon as we saw the bridge in flames the General gave orders to have the railroad track destroyed. Two Massachusetts regiments, who had been lying in reserve, stacked arms and rushed up on the track with a yell and a cheer, and did the work of destruction at short notice. The rails and ties were thoroughly destroyed by physical power and the effect of fire.

General Foster having successfully accomplished all his plans and more, to-day determined to withdraw his force from the field, and to fall back to the first convenient camping place for the night.

FIGHTING AND WAITING.

"Oh, and did you know Luther is going?"

She grew just a shade paler, the pretty little creature who listened, but she answered calmly,

"Indeed! I think he has enough of the combative element in his composition to make a good soldier."

Ella Mason was disappointed. She had expected a scene. She had fired no random shot. It was one aimed straight at her listener's heart, sure to find its mark, she thought. She had not been quick enough to note that sudden pallor, and Mrs. Letchworth's cheeks were blooming a moment after. We have all read of the general who never reeled in his saddle till the fierce charge was over, though the first shot tore its way to his heart with a mortal wound. If men would take lessons from women they would do such things oftener.

"Yes, he is a lieutenant in the Thirteenth. I heard that he persuaded his brother, who thought of going, out of the notion, and went in his stead. He said that men with happy firesides ought to stay at home until all those who had nothing to leave, and no one to mourn for them, had been used up."

"Used up!" Mrs. Letchworth winced again at those words, but Miss Mason was not sharp-sighted enough to perceive it, or skillful enough to hold her ground when her hostess adroitly turned the conversation. Presently she took her leave, and marched off with an uncomfortable sense of defeat. It was well that she did not bethink herself to look back through the window. She would have seen pretty Ada Letchworth frozen into a pulseless calm, like some pale statue of despair. She sat there, no one ever knew how long, with clasped hands and dry lips, and eyes that longed to weep but could not. She did not realize what had paralyzed her. She had not fainted; but, for the time, thought and sense were blotted out utterly.

At length her limbs shook with a sudden shudder. Passionate tears started from her eyes, and she sat there with thought only too active, a helpless, sorrow-stricken girl.

She was only seventeen, five years before, when Luther Letchworth married her. She was only twenty-two now, poor desolate little thing, all alone in the world. How had it happened? She asked herself this question, as a stranger might have done, with a sad wonder.

Surely she and Luther had loved each other when they married. She was an orphan, and he had taken her and her fortune from her guardian's hands, and promised to be to her instead of all lost ties—father, mother, brother, as well as tender lover, cherishing husband. Whose fault was it that after three years he had given her back her fortune unimpaired, and they had each gone again on ways as separate as if their lives had never been joined together by God and man? There was a bond between them, it is true, however widely they might be parted. He could never give her back the light, care-free heart of youth; and, for the present, she could form no other ties, for there was no loop-hole by which even the law could give her absolute freedom. Whose fault was it all? Not hers, she had always said positively, hitherto, in answer to all such questionings of her own heart. Now she hesitated a little, and tried to think honestly where the just blame lay.

I wonder if all such doubtful points will be clear in the light of the last great day? They puzzle one sadly now. They had loved each other, she and Luther, but—; and where the disjunctive conjunction began she could scarcely tell. In the first place, perhaps, seventeen ought not to have wedded thirty. Luther Letchworth was a grave, scholarly man of affairs. He had been used to be master of himself and of others. His habits were fixed, his tastes matured. He thought the fair, sweet child he loved and had chosen would have no will of her own. It was the old dream of moulding a wife—was there ever a case in which it was not a failure?

Ada was not made of material so flexible as he had imagined. She had been used to her own way also. Her tastes were as decided as his own. Her guardian had been a bachelor, for whom a maiden sister had kept house. These two quiet, middle-aged people had never thought of counteracting their ward's wishes, or opposing even her whims. They had not been sentimental over her, but they had been kindly careful of her health and her beauty, for the rest letting her please herself. It did not suit her, after her honey-moon was over, to be expected to submit her judgment to her husband's, though she would have been ready enough to acknowledge that he was wiser and more judicious than she. He had given up every thing to her in their wooing days—nearly all men do—and then, after they have won a bride on such false pretenses, they wonder, when the mask falls, that she turns a Kate on their hands instead of a Griselda.

She was happy a little while. They traveled a few weeks, and Mr. Letchworth had no thought or care but to pleasure his young bride. When they went home he thought it time for the reign of common sense to commence, while her six weeks of indulgence had only strengthened her belief in her right to rule. Then, like most men who marry at thirty, Letchworth really held the reins more tightly than reason warranted. An older and better-disciplined woman than Ada might have been pardoned for growing restive.

It would be too long a story to trace the growth of the bitter root. At first there were quarrels, alternating with reconciliations so sweet, so tender, that Letchworth half longed to anger her again for the bliss of such a making-up. She could not sleep at first without the good-night kiss which sealed her pardon. She would rage internally, or weep, or say some bitter words; but it always ended by her creeping to his side and putting up her innocent child's lips, with the penitent whisper,

"I shall not sleep, Luther, unless you are friends with me."

But after a while, naturally enough, she grew tired of this. When she was conscious that the fault had been hers she was ready to make atonement; but it was not quite so easy when she was well persuaded that the blame was on the other side. She went to sleep one night without the kiss, because she waited obstinately for Luther to offer it. She slept well—did not cry, except a few silent tears once, when she woke in the middle of the night, and saw by the moonlight which came in at the window how much at ease he looked, and how sound his sleep was.

After that the periods of alienation grew longer. She began to be proud and petulant—ah! looking back now she could see that she had been far from faultless. She made no allowance for his pride, that would not bend because it could not. She expected the oak to sway with the wind like the aspen, and called strength coldness and want of heart.

So it went for three wretched years, until they both began to believe that they hated each other. And then she had taunted him one day with having married her without knowing or caring whether they could make each other happy, because she was rich. She had not been prepared for the stern change that darkened his face, the steel glint in his eyes. Yet he spoke calmly:

"You think so, do you?"

"Yes, and it was your blame. I was too young to judge about it. I only believed you when you said you would devote your life to making me happy. You have cheated me!"

She wondered to see how calmly he took her words. It was a suspicious mildness. He did not commit himself. He looked at her quietly, and only asked,

"What would you wish *now?* I can not change the past. Dead is dead."

"Now!" she cried, confronting him with glittering eyes and cheeks aflame—"now I want what I am not likely to get—to be left mistress of myself and my fortune. I ask nothing from you. Give me only my own, and I will go away from you. It will be what the law calls desertion; so that by-and-by you can get your freedom again, and find a better fate."

He only smiled, a calm smile touched with scorn, and went out.

For three days after that, except in the necessary courtesies of the joyless meals to which they sat down together, he never spoke to her. Nights she heard him moving round restlessly in the room over her head. Sometimes thoughts of their olden love would be almost too strong for her, and she would half resolve to go to him, like a penitent child, and beg him to take her back on any terms. She would shiver with exquisite pain to think how near he was—only a few words of confession, of entreaty, and she might be taken home to that only heart in the world upon which she had a claim, which had been such a haven of rest so many times. But some sly demon—which she baptized by the names of proper pride, womanly self-respect—came to her aid, and she would only weep some passionate tears and crush her own hands fiercely against the heart whose mad throbs she could not still, though she forced herself to stay away from Luther.

The morning of the fourth day he spoke to her, courteously as one might to a stranger, calling her Mrs. Letchworth. Would she favor him with five minutes' attention? He had something to say to her.

She followed him into the parlor with a terrible foreboding, a sense of coming doom, that almost choked her. He laid before her some papers which she tried to look at; but she could not see them.

"All your fortune is there," he said, quietly. "Invested in your own name, precisely as it was when I married you. All except this house and furniture. I have spent the past three days in effecting a transfer of every thing I had held differently. I waited to consult you before making any arrangements about this house. I did not know but you might prefer living here to going back to your guardian's."

"Shall I? Would it be proper—alone? Had I better?"

Few things could have touched him as did these helpless, child-like questions. He knew how poorly she was fitted to decide for herself. It was the old confiding tone, used by habit and unconsciously, in which she had appealed to him in so many of her little perplexities. His heart smote him. His conscience pricked him. Was he doing right to leave her to struggle with all the difficulties and disheartenments of life alone—that child! Then he hardened himself again. She was rich, he thought. She had that fortune by which she had accused him of being won. She need not be helpless in a world where Money is King. He answered her coldly,

"It is for you to decide what you prefer. The house is yours, deeded to you in your own name. With such a housekeeper as you could easily secure there would be no impropriety in your living here, if you like that way best."

"I think—I am sure I should," she said, meekly.

Did he guess that she clung to that house, even then, for his sake; because no other spot could ever be to her like that one, consecrated by the ghost of so dear a love! He showed no emotion.

"There is nothing more to be done, then," he said, quietly. "My own effects are already arranged for removal. I will send a man for them at noon. They are in the room over yours. If you will be kind enough to let them stay there three hours longer, I will give you no farther trouble."

She longed to sob, to shriek, to wail out her agony; but he was so calm it made her calm also. She half put out her hand toward him, and she said gently, humbly even,

"Good-by, then, and may God bless you by-and-by with some one that will make your life happier than I could! Remember, Luther, I do not blame you. It was only because we ought never to have come together."

Was he afraid to touch those little fingers? He pretended not to see the outstretched hand. He made short work of his good-by; but when he was out of her sight he stopped a moment in the hall, and looked round for some token of her. He saw only one, a little blue bow which had been used to fasten her collar, and fallen unnoticed to the floor. She would never miss it. He picked it up, and thrust it into his bosom.

No matter what she felt when he was gone—how she wore her sackcloth and ashes—what cry of mortal pain was forced from her lips by the pressure of her crown of thorns. Her sorrow developed a strength unknown before. She felt that inaction would kill her. Before night she had suited herself with a housekeeper; given to her guardian the only explanation of her situation which she would ever vouchsafe to any one; and settled down to her lonely life in the house which would be no longer a home.

Hearing of all this, of course Luther Letchworth misjudged her, as men almost always do misjudge women, and thought that she was not suffering.

It was a nine days' wonder to the good people of Sturbridge, one and all. Mr. Letchworth added to the excitement by quietly removing his business to Boston; and, as the absent are always wrong, his going away transferred to his wife the sympathy even of the women. He had ill-used her dreadfully, they were sure. They began to besiege her with visits of condolence. When they found that she resolutely refused to open her lips upon the subject the tide of popular feeling turned again, and they were confident that she must have been altogether to blame because she had nothing to say for herself.

Ella Mason was Mr. Letchworth's cousin. She liked him, had loved him even, as such selfish natures do love, before Ada's fair face won him. When the separation took place she would have cut Mrs. Letchworth's acquaintance but that she could not deprive herself of the happiness of going to see how she bore her trouble. She stifled her resentment for the solace of her curiosity, and had kept up a sort of one-sided intimacy with Ada ever since, making her frequent visits which were never returned. They were borne patiently, because she was the only one who ever spoke in that dwelling the name which still had power to thrill all the pulses of that lonely, suffering heart.

When the war broke out some dumb, foreboding instinct had told Ada that sooner or later he would go; therefore Miss Mason's words had not surprised her. Perhaps they would not so much have pained her but for the insinuation that he went because he had no happy home to leave. If he had been her loving husband still, she thought she would not have held him back. She could have blessed him and sent him forth to do the noblest work of the centuries—work for God and man. Then, if he had fallen, she could have gone to him some time—hers hereafter as here. But how if he went now—went because his life was blighted and worthless? Would not a curse lie at her door? If he died would not his blood be required at her hands? and would she ever dare, in all the ages, to creep to his side and pray for pardon? Alas! she felt now that unless she could be at peace with him she should hardly know whether even heaven was bright. And again she asked herself whose the blame had been, and grew more and more ready to bear it all herself.

It was nightfall of the day on which she had heard of his enlistment when a light—a sort of inspiration, twin-born of hope and agony—came to her. A Lieutenant in the Thirteenth! Had they yet left Boston? Might she not be in time to see him before he went? She would try. She could tell when she met him whether his heart clung to her still. If any love was in his soul it would look out at her through his eyes. If those eyes were pitiless she would only ask him to forgive her for all the pain she had ever given him, and go away home again with no kiss or blessing, only that prayer for pardon. But if she saw love in his looks—she fell a-weeping there at the thought of what might be, of a full reconciliation, of feeling his arms close round her, his lips on her cheek, hearing his whispers in her ear. Would it not kill her to be so happy? In such an hour even death would not be terrible.

The next morning she went to Boston. She took a carriage from the dépôt to the State-House, making sure of learning there all she wished to know. As they were about to turn into Washington Street the driver drew up his horses and stopped. Impatient of the delay she looked out. A regiment was marching by. She heard the martial music pealing exultantly. She saw the banners wave, the bright arms glitter in the sun; and straining her eyes to watch each man as he marched she saw him—Luther. She shrieked aloud, calling his name with a passionate cry, which she thought should have gone straight to his heart; but the exultant music swallowed up her weak woman's voice in its great waves of melody, and her husband marched on with the rest. When the last man had gone by she wrenched open the carriage door and made the driver hear her. He dismounted respectfully, and wondered why she was so pale, and what had changed her so in such brief while.

"I have altered my mind," she gasped, huskily. "You may drive back again to the dépôt. I shall not go to the State-House."

She went home again—poor desolate child, only twenty-two, and so solitary in the world. She wondered how she was going to live, and was surprised, after a day or two, to find that she was less listless and miserable than before. She had an interest now in watching the movements of the Thirteenth; and, though she hardly confessed it to herself, she lived on one hope. He might not be killed; he might come back; he might forgive her. She would account no humiliation too great now which could restore him to her.

Months after months passed on. She was not idle. Womanhood grew on her rapidly. She used her wealth and her time for the war. Perhaps something she sent might help him. This was motive enough in itself, though I think even without that motive she would have done her utmost, for she had just begun to learn the meaning of life.

She shivered when the autumn leaves fell and the winter came. Where was he? how sheltered? how faring? The spring brought her, for his sake only, a flutter of rejoicing. For herself, bird-song and springing verdure, breath of blossoms, murmurous music of stream and fountain, passed by unheeded. She lived only in her work and her waiting.

So it went till the breathless, turbulent days of the raid into Maryland, when every heart stood still in a wordless silence of terror and expectation. Then one night she read his name in the list of the dangerously wounded. She waited for no confirmation, no farther tidings. The next morning she started. She hurried on night and day, without pause or rest, guided by some subtle instinct which seemed to tell her where her way led, until at length she reached the temporary hospital where lay the sufferers after one of those fierce fights. She went toward it with fainting heart but firm pulses—they would not think her fit to take care of him else.

A tall man in the uniform of a lieutenant was just coming out. She met him on the threshold. She fell fainting across his arms, which opened involuntarily to support her. Surely he knew that white face? but how three years had changed it! He gathered her close to him jealously. He took her to his own quarters and laid her down. He did not know what to do for her, so he waited for her to recover. He had two or three questions to ask then. He was so earnest that his voice sounded stern.

"Why are you here, Ada?"

For answer she drew from her bosom the list of the wounded, and showed him his name. His voice trembled a little as he asked his next question.

"It was a mistake in the returns. Did you come because of that?"

She bowed her head mutely, holding her hand tight over her breast.

"Did you think I would want you to take care of me, Ada—you whom I had not seen for so long?"

"Oh, I did not know! I did not know!" she cried, wildly. "Do not blame me! I came because I could not stay away. I thought you might die, and I wanted to hear you say first that you could forgive me!"

"Had you forgiven me, Ada?" He was looking at her with a gaze which would have eased her heartache had she dared to meet it.

"I do not know, Luther, that I had any thing to forgive. I wonder only that you had patience with me so long. I was such a weak, foolish child. I must have tried you sorely, and that last accusation was so unjust. I knew you better all the time than to think you married me for any thing but love. I am a woman now, and if it were not too late I think I should do better."

"*Is* it too late, Ada? The chief fault was mine. I was too old and too hard to wear such a delicate flower in my bosom. I was stern with you, and expected you to give up more than any woman could. And yet, child, I loved you to madness all the time. I have never ceased to love you just as well. I have been too proud to go back to you—that was where you have shown yourself nobler—but I have cherished your memory as a lost angel thinks of heaven. See this knot. You had dropped it from your collar the morning we parted. It has never left my heart. I have worn it into battle as other men wear breast-plates. See, as yet no blood has stained it. It has been my talisman. Ada, I was not worth your seeking for me thus and here."

"*I* thought you were," and that blush and smile made Ada young again.

Their joy, but why dwell on it? Who has ever rendered into mortal language the song of the spheres? They had been happy when they were bride and groom, in the old honey-moon time. They were something more, now that long pain had chastened and purified their hearts, and they had learned what love and union were worth by the agony of separation and solitude.

After a few days he sent her home. She was to wait there for him. He is a brave man, and he has no fear of death. He dreams fond dreams of a life beside which the brightest days of the old time were dull and colorless; of happy years with her, and an old age when they will look together toward the sunlight on the distant hills, and the land where the dawning is eternal.

But if they never come, those years, if some bold charge is his last, and the dear eyes waiting at home never see him more, he will not murmur. Her love is mighty to give him peace. He knows that there is a life above and beyond this world, and in the country of souls they who were one here will be one hereafter. So she waits and he fights, and neither will repine whether God's will brings them the fruition of their hopes on earth, or ordains that they shall wait for it till love and faith are glorified with immortality. Sure, let fate do what fate will, that they can not be long apart, they have courage for their work.

A MILITARY TABLEAU.

"I don't approve of it at all—in fact, Miss Mabel, I feel it my duty to say that I most highly *dis*approve of it!"

Mr. Jonas Brown cleared his throat, and tapped his gold snuff-box solemnly as he spoke. For, if a bald head and forty years couldn't give weight to a man's opinions, what could?

Mabel Crofton sat opposite to him, a perfect little sweet-pea blossom, with cheeks like damask roses and large wistful hazel eyes. One felt almost inclined to envy the chestnut brown curls that touched her round white shoulders, and the blue belt that circled her trim waist. Only seventeen, and pretty enough to drive a man wild!

She did not reply to Mr. Brown—only put out her scarlet lip with the least bit in the world of a pout.

"I should deeply regret, Miss Mabel, to see any young lady in whom I felt—*ahem!*—an interest dressed up as 'Columbia,' or 'Britannia,' or any other country on the face of the globe. I must repeat that I consider it improper!"

"It's only tableaux, Mr. Brown!" said Mabel, demurely, laying a fold in her work, and eying it with her head coquettishly on one side. "And besides, it is for the benefit of the wounded soldiers. What's more, I've promised the girls to be 'Columbia,' and I couldn't possibly disappoint 'em!"

"I am much grieved, Miss Mabel, but—"

Mr. Jonas Brown's sentence was never finished, for just then Mabel sprang up with a little exclamation of pleasure.

"Oh, Charley, I'm *so* glad to see you!"

How Mr. Jonas hated the tall young volunteer whose hand had closed on Mabel's warm, white fingers, gold thimble and all!

"I'm afraid I interfere, Mr. Arkell!" said he, rising and bowing with what he intended for an air of intense irony.

"Oh, not at all, Sir, I assure you!" said Charley Arkell, in the extremest good faith. "Pray keep your seat!"

"No, I thank you, Sir," said Mr. Jonas, walking off in high dudgeon."

He proceeded straight to the library, where Dr. Crofton sat snugly smoking his after-dinner cigar, and entered with pursed-up mouth and spectacles that quivered with inward wrath.

"Sit down, Mr. Brown, sit down," said the Doctor. "Have a cigar, eh? Oh, I forgot that you don't smoke."

"Thank you, Sir," said Mr. Brown, solemnly. "I do *not* appreciate the narcotic qualities of the weed."

"Well, how do you get along with Mabel?" said the good-humored Doctor, putting his slippered feet on the fender.

"Not as rapidly as I could wish, Sir. The fact is—"

"The fact is," interrupted Dr. Crofton, "you're not *go-a-head* enough in the style of your courtship, Mr. Jonas!"

"How do you mean, Sir?"

"Girls like a dashing, ardent sort of fellow! Now, if I were you, I should even go with her to this tableau affair."

"But, Dr. Crofton, I have before mentioned that I disapprove—"

"Oh, hang that sort of thing! No offense, Mr. Jonas; but it is your business to approve whatever *she* likes just now. When she's Mrs. Brown it is time to remodel her tastes and fancies."

Mr. Jonas's solemn facial muscles slightly relaxed at the idea of ripe, rosy little Mabel's being "Mrs. Brown."

"Then it is advisable that I should conform to the popular prejudices, and confer my presence upon—"

"By all means, Mr. Jonas. And whatever you do, don't allow Charley Arkell to get the start of you. I sha'n't interfere with the girl, but I *should* prefer you for a son-in-law."

Didn't our Mabel look more bewitching than ever as "Columbia" in the coronet of stars, and the silken draperies of "red, white, and blue?" Mr. Jonas thought so—and so did somebody else; for Charley Arkell was there, the busiest and merriest of all the impromptu "stage-managers."

The audience-hall was densely packed, and the curtain just ready to rise, when, lo and behold! the nice young man who was to personate "Our Loyal Prisoners" was discovered to be missing. Gone home, at the eleventh hour, with a jumping toothache.

"What *shall* we do!" cried Minnie Bell. "Charley, *you* take the part!"

"Well, I like that," said Arkell. "How can I be a captive in chains and climb up the walls at Donelson, waving the Union flag, at one and the same time?"

"But there's no one else to take it!"

"Yes there is; here's Mr. Jonas Brown!"

"No, no!" gasped Mr. Jonas, "I disapprove on principle—"

"If Miss Crofton imposes the chains you surely will not be so ungallant as to refuse to wear them," said Charley, alertly advancing with an armful of rusty fetters, and before Mr. Jonas could remonstrate, he was wrapped in black serge vestments, his hands and feet manacled, his shoulders draped with chains, and his respectable bald head topped off with a disheveled wig. The very life-currents in his veins stood still with dismay—he opened his dry lips to dissent vehemently, but it was useless. The tiny bell had sounded—the green curtain was slowly ascending, and there he sat, *he*, Mr. Jonas Brown, President of the Bank, and Director of the Insurance Company, paraded before the eyes of the whole town under about forty pounds of rusty iron!

While Charley Arkell and Miss Croften were indulging in irrepressible giggles that nearly ruined the *prestige* of their parts—it couldn't—no, it *couldn't* be possible that they were laughing at *him!*

It seemed an age before the curtain fell, and then Arkell came forward to lead the manacled hero from the stage.

"Upon my word, Mr. Brown, you act splendidly—sat like a statue! Depend on it your forte is the footlights."

If a look of deeply-lowering indignation could annihilate a man, Charley Arkell would have been knocked flat.

"Just sit in this ante-room a few seconds. I'll come and unlock the manacles the minute I've arranged the next group. There's the bell now!"

And away sprang Charley to his task.

Five minutes passed away—ten—twenty—an hour—and no one arrived to free Mr. Jonas from his shackles. He grew impatient and shouted aloud—still no one came! Ten o'clock struck—he heard the departing rush of many footsteps. The audience were dispersing then—and no Arkell. He rose to his feet with difficulty, under that superincumbent mass of iron, and staggered to the door. Ye fates! it was bolted on the other side. He redoubled his shouting, but in vain, and then—what else could he have done?—sat down and used one or two strong adjectives relative to tableaux in general, and Mr. Arkell in particular.

"Here's a pretty situation for Jonas Brown Esquire to be in!" he groaned. "I shall catch my death of cold. I shall have the rheumatic fever. Thermometer at zero, and no fire!"

And, as he involuntarily shivered, the fetters clanked with dismal distinctness.

Poor Mr. Jonas Brown!

"Dear me, Mr. Brown, who'd ha' thought o' seein' *you* here?" ejaculated the astounded janitor of the hall next morning as he unbolted the door and bounced into the presence of "Captivity." "Bless my stars! how on earth—"

"Confound your questions!" roared Mr. Jonas. "Take off these things, or I'll—"

Mr. Hodgson did not stop to hear the alternative, but flew to summon aid. "For he do look awful," said Mr. Hodgson.

Jonas Brown did not wait even for his matutinal coffee, but went straight to Dr. Crofton's, resolved to reveal the full extent of Charley Arkell's villainy, or perish in the attempt.

The sitting-room door was open as he entered, and Mabel stood there, her bright eyes drenched with tears, and her cheek against Arkell's mustache—a sort of *tableau* not at all to Mr. Brown's taste.

"Hallo! what does this mean?" he stammered, furiously.

"Ah, Mr. Brown, is it?" said Charley, courteously, but without taking his arm from Mabel's waist. "Glad to see you, Sir. I'm just off with the regiment. We march in less than an hour. Hope you'll all take good care of my wife while I'm gone."

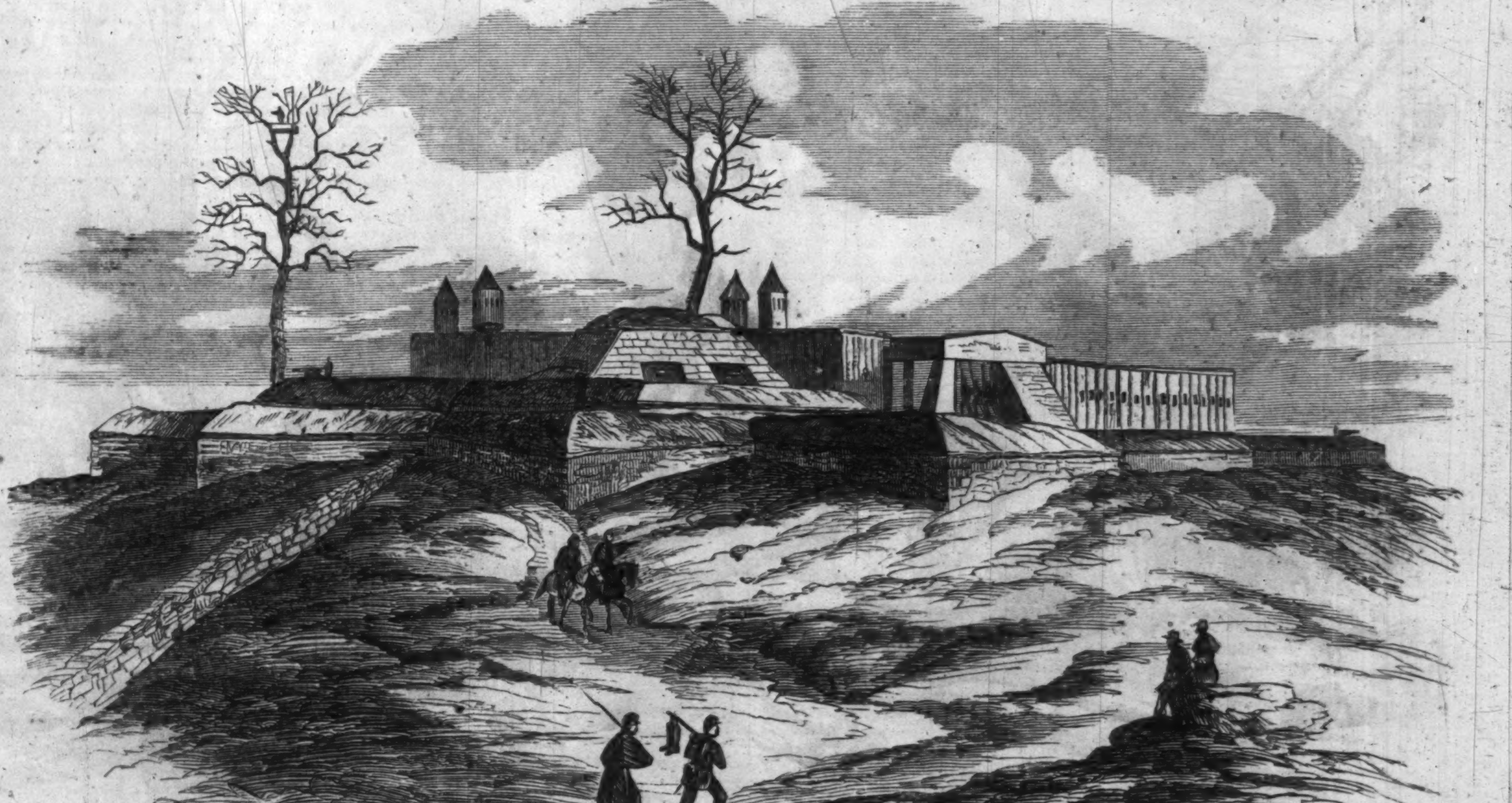
"Your *wife!*"

"Yes. Oh, I forgot that you were unacquainted with the circumstances. The sleighing was so capital last night when we left the Hall that we thought we'd just go on to C—— and get married. One more kiss, love, and good-by."

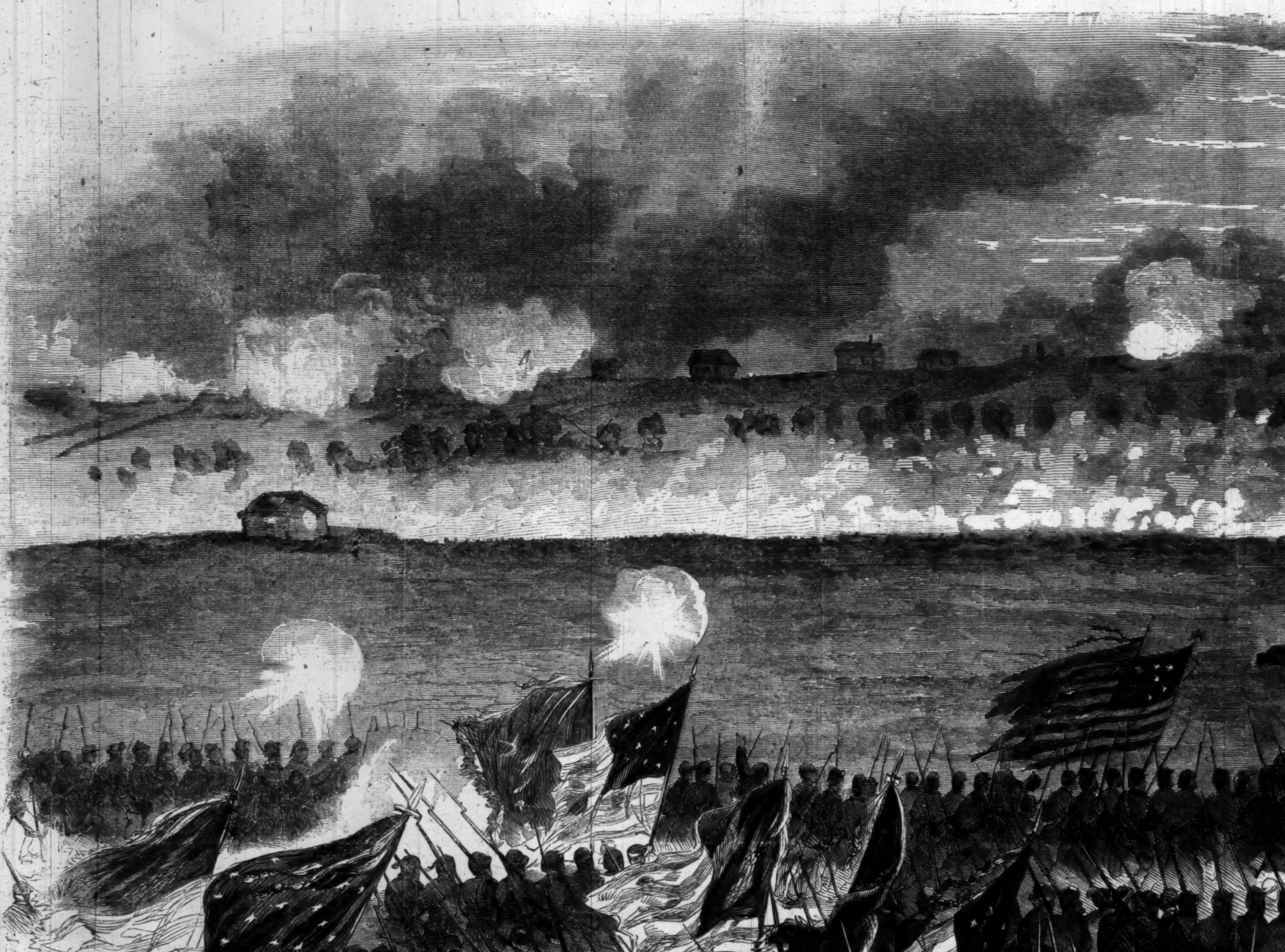
And so Charley Arkell went merrily off to the wars, and "Love was still the lord of all." As for Mr. Jonas Brown, he is "wearing the willow" and groaning under the rheumatism at the same time.

FORT NEGLEY, TENNESSEE.

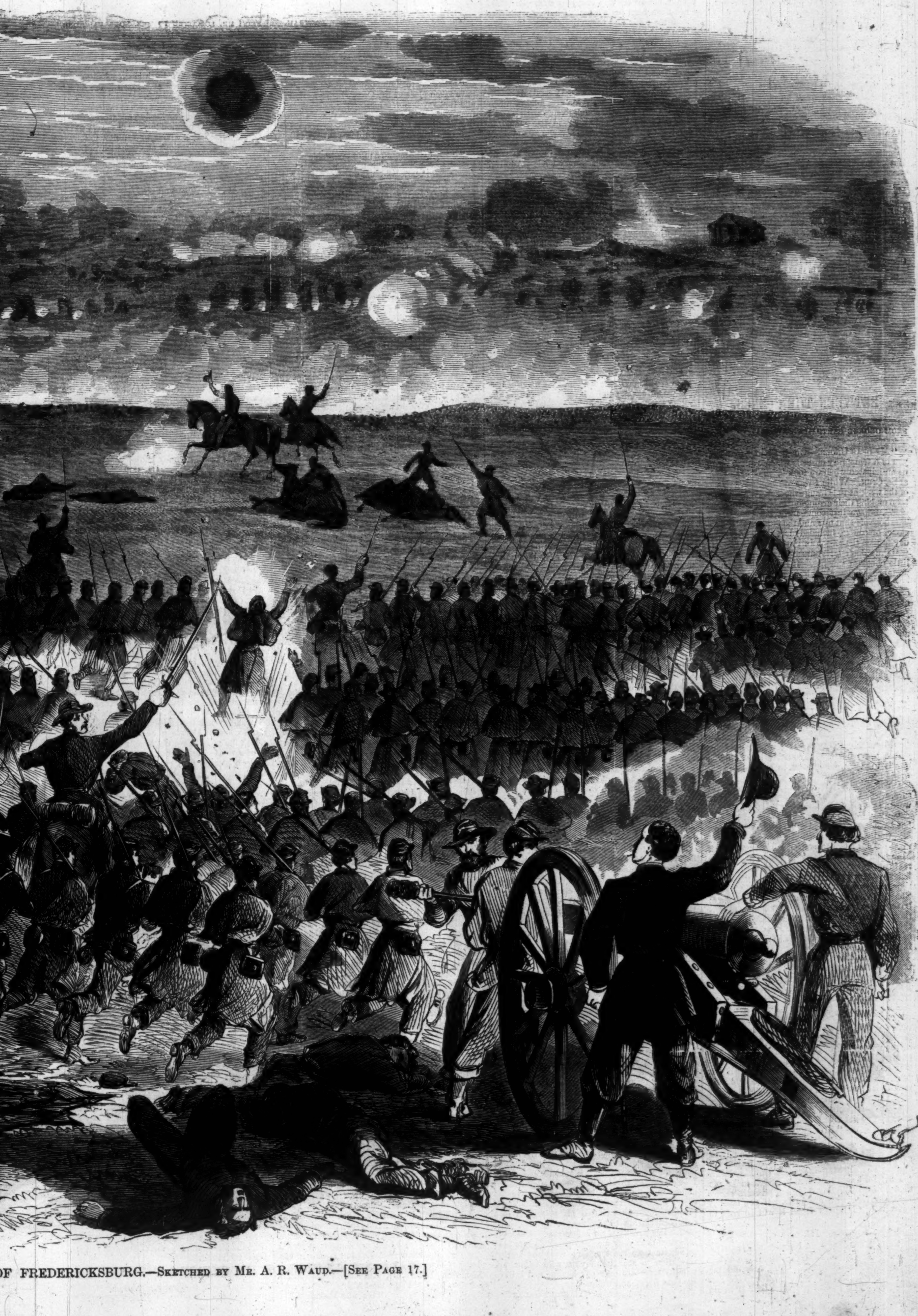
Passing through Nashville, casting your eyes above the houses, the first thing that strikes your eye is the State-house; the second, Fort Negley. The latter, situated upon Nashville Heights, commands a view of the whole country for miles around, wh[illegible] its cannon point in every and any direction. Our artist was not allowed to give any thing but a view of the fort, and we fear it will be contraband to write a description of it; as for the view, it can do no harm.



FORT NEGLEY, NEAR NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE.—Sketched by our Special Artist, Mr. Beard.—[See Above.]



GALLANT CHARGE OF HUMPHREY'S DIVISION AT THE BATTLE OF F



OF FREDERICKSBURG.—Sketched by Mr. A. R. Waud.—[See Page 17.]

OVER!

A KNIGHT came prancing on his way,
And across the path a lady lay:
"Stoop a little and hear me speak:"
Then, "You are strong, and I am weak:
Ride over me now, and kill me."

He opened wide his gay blue eyes,
Like one o'ermastered by surprise:
His cheek and brow grew burning red:
"Long looked for, come at last," she said:
"Ride over me now, and kill me."

Then softly spoke the knight, and smiled:
"Fair maiden, whence this mood so wild?"
"Smile on," said she; "my reign is o'er;
But do my bidding yet once more:
Ride over me now, and kill me."

He smote his steed of dapple-gray,
And lightly cleared her where she lay;
But still as he sped on amain,
She murmured ever, "Turn again:
Ride over me now, and kill me!"

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the Year 1862, by Harper & Brothers, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.]

NO NAME.

By WILKIE COLLINS,

AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," "DEAD SECRET," ETC., ETC.

☞ Printed from the Manuscript and early Proof-sheets purchased by the Proprietors of "Harper's Weekly."

BETWEEN THE SCENES.

I.

FROM GEORGE BARTRAM TO ADMIRAL BARTRAM.

"LONDON, *April* 3, 1848.

"MY DEAR UNCLE,—One hasty line, to inform you of a temporary obstacle which we neither of us anticipated when we took leave of each other at St. Crux. While I was wasting the last days of the week at the Grange the Tyrrels must have been making their arrangements for leaving London. I have just come from Portland Place. The house is shut up; and the family (Miss Vanstone, of course, included) left England yesterday to pass the season in Paris.

"Pray don't let yourself be annoyed by this little check at starting. It is of no serious importance whatever. I have got the address at which the Tyrrels are living, and I mean to cross the Channel after them by the mail to-night. I shall find my opportunity in Paris just as soon (perhaps sooner) than I could have found it in London. The grass shall not grow under my feet, I promise you. For once in my life I will take Time as fiercely by the forelock as if I was the most impetuous man in England; and, rely on it, the moment I know the result you shall know the result too.

"Affectionately yours,
"GEORGE BARTRAM."

II.

FROM GEORGE BARTRAM TO MISS GARTH.

"PARIS, *April* 13.

"DEAR MISS GARTH,—I have just written, with a heavy heart, to my uncle; and I think I owe it to your kind interest in me not to omit writing next to you.

"You will feel for my disappointment, I am sure, when I tell you, in the fewest and plainest words, that Miss Vanstone has refused me.

"My vanity may have grievously misled me, but I confess I expected a very different result. My vanity may be misleading me still, for I must acknowledge to you privately that I think Miss Vanstone was sorry to refuse me. The reason she gave for her decision—no doubt a sufficient reason in her estimation—did not at the time, and does not now, seem sufficient to *me*. She spoke in the sweetest and kindest manner; but she firmly declared that 'her family misfortunes' left her no honorable alternative but to think of my own interests, as I had not thought of them myself, and gratefully to decline accepting my offer.

"She was so painfully agitated that I could not venture to plead my own cause as I might otherwise have pleaded it. At the first attempt I made to touch the personal question she entreated me to spare her, and abruptly left the room. I am still ignorant whether I am to interpret the 'family misfortunes' which have set up this barrier between us as meaning the misfortune for which her parents alone are to blame, or the misfortune of her having such a woman as Mrs. Noel Vanstone for her sister. In whichever of these circumstances the obstacle lies it is no obstacle in my estimation. Can nothing remove it? Is there no hope? Forgive me for asking these questions. I can not bear up against my bitter disappointment. Neither she nor you nor any one but myself know how I love her.

"Ever most truly yours,
"GEORGE BARTRAM.

"P.S.—I shall leave for England in a day or two, passing through London, on my way to St. Crux. There are family reasons, connected with the hateful subject of money, which make me look forward with any thing but pleasure to my next interview with my uncle. If you address your letter to Long's Hotel it will be sure to reach me."

III.

FROM MISS GARTH TO GEORGE BARTRAM.

"WESTMORLAND HOUSE, *April* 16.

"DEAR MR. BARTRAM,—You only did me justice in supposing that your letter would distress me. If you had supposed that it would make me excessively angry as well, you would not have been far wrong. I have no patience with the pride and perversity of the young women of the present day.

"I have heard from Norah. It is a long letter, stating the particulars in full detail. I am now going to put all the confidence in your honor and your discretion which I really feel. For your sake and for Norah's I am going to let you know what the scruple really is which has misled her into the pride and folly of refusing you. I am old enough to speak out; and I can tell you if she had only been wise enough to let her own wishes guide her she would have said, Yes—and gladly too.

"The original cause of all the mischief is no less a person than your worthy uncle—Admiral Bartram.

"It seems that the admiral took it into his head (I suppose during your absence) to go to London by himself, and to satisfy some curiosity of his own about Norah by calling in Portland Place under pretense of renewing his old friendship with the Tyrrels. He came at luncheon-time and saw Norah, and, from all I can hear, was apparently better pleased with her than he expected or wished to be when he came into the house.

So far this is mere guess-work; but it is unluckily certain that he and Mrs. Tyrrel had some talk together alone when luncheon was over. Your name was not mentioned; but when their conversation fell on Norah, you were in both their minds of course. The admiral (doing her full justice personally) declared himself smitten with pity for her hard lot in life. The scandalous conduct of her sister must always stand (he feared) in the way of her future advantage. Who could marry her without first making it a condition that she and her sister were to be absolute strangers to each other? And even then the objection would remain—the serious objection to the husband's family—of being connected by marriage with such a woman as Mrs. Noel Vanstone. It was very sad; it was not the poor girl's fault—but it was none the less true that her sister was her rock ahead in life. So he ran on, with no real ill-feeling toward Norah, but with an obstinate belief in his own prejudices which bore the aspect of ill-feeling, and which people with more temper than judgment would be but too readily disposed to resent accordingly.

"Unfortunately Mrs. Tyrrel is one of those people. She is an excellent, warm-hearted woman, with a quick temper and very little judgment—strongly attached to Norah, and heartily interested in Norah's welfare. From all I can learn, she first resented the expression of the admiral's opinion, in his presence, as worldly and selfish in the last degree; and then interpreted it behind his back as a hint to her to discourage his nephew's visits, which was a downright insult offered to a lady in her own house. This was foolish enough so far, but worse folly was to come.

"As soon as your uncle was gone Mrs. Tyrrel, most unwisely and improperly, sent for Norah, and repeating the conversation that had taken place, warned her of the reception she might expect from the man who stood toward you in the position of a father, if she accepted an offer of marriage on your part. When I tell you that Norah's faithful attachment to her sister still remains unshaken, and that there lies hidden under her noble submission to the unhappy circumstances of her life a proud susceptibility to slights of all kinds, which is deeply seated in her nature, you will understand the true motive of the refusal which has so naturally and so justly disappointed you. They are all three equally to blame in this matter. Your uncle was wrong to state his objections as roundly and inconsiderately as he did. Mrs. Tyrrel was wrong to let her temper get the better of her, and to suppose herself insulted where no insult was intended. And Norah was wrong to place a scruple of pride, and a hopeless belief in her sister which no strangers can be expected to share, above the higher claims of an attachment which might have secured the happiness and the prosperity of her future life.

"But the mischief has been done. The next question is, can the harm be remedied?

"I hope and believe it can. My advice is this: Don't take No for an answer. Give her time enough to reflect on what she has done, and to regret it (as I believe she will regret it) in secret—trust to my influence over her to plead your cause for you at every opportunity I can find—wait patiently for the right moment—and ask her again. Men, being accustomed to act on reflection themselves, are a great deal too apt to believe that women act on reflection too. Women do nothing of the sort. They act on impulse; and in nine cases out of ten they are heartily sorry for it afterward.

"In the mean while you must help your own interests by inducing your uncle to alter his opinion, or at least to make the concession of keeping his opinion to himself. Mrs. Tyrrel has rushed to the conclusion that the harm he has done he did intentionally, which is as much as to say, in so many words, that he had a prophetic conviction, when he came into the house, of what she would do when he left it. My explanation of the matter is a much simpler one. I believe that the knowledge of your attachment naturally roused his curiosity to see the object of it, and that Mrs. Tyrrel's injudicious praises of Norah irritated his objections into openly declaring themselves. Any way, your course lies equally plain before you. Use your influence over your uncle to persuade him into setting matters right again; trust my settled resolution to see Norah your wife before six months more are over our heads; and believe me your friend and well-wisher,

"HARRIET GARTH."

IV.

FROM MRS. DRAKE TO GEORGE BARTRAM.

"ST. CRUX, *April* 17.

"SIR,—I direct these lines to the hotel you usually stay at in London, hoping that you may return soon enough from foreign parts to receive my letter without delay.

"I am sorry to say that some unpleasant events have taken place at St. Crux since you left it, and that my honored master the admiral is far from enjoying his usual good health. On both these accounts I venture to write to you on my own responsibility—for I think your presence is needed in the house.

"Early in the month a most regretable circumstance took place. Our new parlor-maid was discovered by Mr. Mazey, at a late hour of the night (with her master's basket of keys in her possession), prying into the private documents kept in the east library. The girl removed herself from the house the next morning before we were any of us astir, and she has not been heard of since. This event has annoyed and alarmed my master very seriously; and to make matters worse, on the day when the girl's treacherous conduct was discovered, the admiral was seized with the first symptoms of a severe inflammatory cold. He was not himself aware, nor was any one else, how he had caught the chill. The doctor was sent for and kept the inflammation down until the day before yesterday—when it broke out again under circumstances which I am sure you will be sorry to hear as I am truly sorry to write of them.

"On the date I have just mentioned—I mean the fifteenth of the month—my master himself informed me that he had been dreadfully disappointed by a letter received from you which had come in the morning from foreign parts, and had brought him bad news. He did not tell me what the news was—but I have never, in all the years I have passed in the admiral's service, seen him so distressingly upset and so unlike himself as he was on that day. At night his uneasiness seemed to increase. He was in such a state of irritation that he could not bear the sound of Mr. Mazey's hard breathing outside his door, and he laid his positive orders on the old man to go into one of the bedrooms for that night. Mr. Mazey, to his own great regret, was of course obliged to obey.

"Our only means of preventing the admiral from leaving his room in his sleep, if the fit unfortunately took him, being now removed, Mr. Mazey and I agreed to keep watch by turns through the night—sitting with the door ajar in one of the empty rooms near our master's bedchamber. We could think of nothing better to do than this—knowing he would not allow us to lock him in; and not having the door-key in our possession, even if we could have ventured to secure him in his room without his permission. I kept watch for the first two hours, and then Mr. Mazey took my place. After having been some little time in my own room, it occurred to me that the old man was hard of hearing and that if his eyes grew at all heavy in the night his ears were not to be trusted to warn him if any thing happened. I slipped on my clothes again and went back to Mr. Mazey. He was neither asleep nor awake—he was between the two. My mind misgave me, and I went on to the admiral's room. The door was open and the bed was empty.

"Mr. Mazey and I went down stairs instantly. We looked in all the north rooms, one after another, and found no traces of him. I thought of the drawing-room next, and, being the most active of the two, went first to examine it. The moment I turned the sharp corner of the passage I saw my master coming toward me through the open drawing-room door, asleep and dreaming, with his keys in his hands. The sliding-door behind him was open also; and the fear came to me then, and has remained with me ever since, that his dream had led him through the Banqueting Hall into the east rooms. We abstained from waking him, and followed his steps until he returned of his own accord to his bedchamber. The next morning, I grieve to say, all the bad symptoms came back, and none of the remedies employed have succeeded in getting the better of them yet. By the doctor's advice we refrained from telling the admiral what had happened. He is still under the impression that he passed the night as usual in his own room.

"I have been careful to enter into all the particulars of this unfortunate accident, because neither Mr. Mazey nor myself desire to screen ourselves from blame, if blame we have deserved. We both acted for the best, and we both beg and pray you will consider our responsible situation, and come as soon as possible to St. Crux. Our honored master is very hard to manage; and the doctor thinks, as we do, that your presence is wanted in the house.

"I remain, Sir, with Mr. Mazey's respects and my own, your humble servant,

"SOPHIA DRAKE."

V.

FROM GEORGE BARTRAM TO MISS GARTH.

"ST. CRUX, *April* 22.

"DEAR MISS GARTH,—Pray excuse my not thanking you sooner for your kind and consoling letter. We are in sad trouble at St. Crux. Any little irritation I might have felt at my poor uncle's unlucky interference in Portland Place is all forgotten in the misfortune of his serious illness. He is suffering from internal inflammation, produced by cold; and symptoms have shown themselves which are dangerous at his age. A physician from London is now in the house. You shall hear more in a few days. Meantime, believe me, with sincere gratitude,

"Yours most truly,
"GEORGE BARTRAM."

VI.

FROM MR. LOSCOMBE TO MRS. NOEL VANSTONE.

"LINCOLN'S INN-FIELDS, *May* 6.

"DEAR MADAM,—I have unexpectedly received some information which is of the most vital importance to your interests. The news of Admiral Bartram's death has reached me this morning. He expired at his own house on the fourth of the present month.

"This event at once disposes of the considerations which I had previously endeavored to impress on you, in relation to your discovery at St. Crux. The wisest course we can now follow, is to open communications at once with the executors of the deceased gentleman; addressing them through the medium of the admiral's legal adviser, in the first instance.

"I have dispatched a letter this day to the solicitor in question. It simply warns him that we have lately become aware of the existence of a private Document, controlling the deceased gentleman in his use of the legacy devised to him by Mr. Noel Vanstone's will. My letter assumes that the document will be easily found among the admiral's papers; and it mentions that I am the solicitor appointed by Mrs. Noel Vanstone to receive communications on her behalf. My object in taking this step is to cause a search to be instituted for the Trust—in the very probable event of the executors not having met with it yet—before the usual measures are adopted for the administration of the admiral's estate. We will threaten legal proceedings if we find that the object does not succeed. But I anticipate no such necessity. Admiral Bartram's executors must be men of high standing and position, and they will do justice to you and to themselves in this matter, by looking for the Trust.

"Under these circumstances you will naturally ask, 'What are our prospects when the document is found?' Our prospects have a bright side and a dark side. Let us take the bright side to begin with.

"What do we actually know?

"We know, first, that the Trust does certainly exist. Secondly, that there is a provision in it relating to the marriage of Mr. George Bartram in a given time. Thirdly, that the time (six months from the date of your husband's death) expired on the third of this month. Fourthly, that Mr. George Bartram (as I have found out by inquiry, in the absence of any positive information on the subject possessed by yourself) is, at the present moment, a single man. The conclusion naturally follows that the object contemplated by the Trust, in this case, is an object that has failed.

"If no other provisions have been inserted in the document—or if, being inserted, those other provisions should be discovered to have failed also—I believe it to be impossible (especially if evidence can be found that the admiral himself considered the Trust binding on him) for the executors to deal with your husband's fortune as legally forming part of Admiral Bartram's estate. The legacy is expressly declared to have been left to him, on the understanding that he applies it to certain stated objects—and those objects have failed. What is to be done with the money? It was not left to the admiral himself, on the testator's own showing; and the purposes for which it *was* left have not been, and can not be, carried out. I believe (if the case here supposed really happens) that the money must revert to the testator's estate. In that event the Law, dealing with it as a matter of necessity, divides it into two equal portions. One half goes to Mr. Noel Vanstone's childless widow, and the other half is divided among Mr. Noel Vanstone's next of kin.

"You will no doubt discover the obvious objection to the case in our favor, as I have here put it. You will see that it depends for its practical realization, not on one contingency, but on a series of contingencies, which must all happen exactly as we wish them to happen. I admit the force of the objection—but I can tell you at the same time that these said contingencies are by no means so improbable as they may look on the face of them.

"We have every reason to believe that the Trust, like the Will, was *not* drawn by a lawyer. That is one circumstance in our favor—that is enough of itself to cast a doubt on the soundness of all or any of the remaining provisions which we may not be acquainted with. Another chance which we may count on is to be found, as I think, in that strange handwriting, placed under the signature on the third page of the Letter, which you saw, but which you unhappily omitted to read. All the probabilities point to these lines as written by Admiral Bartram; and the position which they occupy is certainly consistent with the theory that they touch the important subject of his own sense of obligation under the Trust.

"I wish to raise no false hopes in your mind. I only desire to satisfy you that we have a case worth trying.

"As for the dark side of the prospect I need not enlarge on it. After what I have already written, you will understand that the existence of a sound provision unknown to us in the Trust—which has been properly carried out by the admiral, or which can be properly carried out by his representatives—would be necessarily fatal to our hopes. The legacy would be in this case devoted to the purpose or purposes contemplated by your husband, and from that moment you would have no claim.

"I have only to add, that as soon as I hear from the late admiral's man of business you shall know the result.

"Believe me,
"Dear madam,
"Faithfully yours,
"JOHN LOSCOMBE."

VII.

FROM GEORGE BARTRAM TO MISS GARTH.

"St. Crux, *May* 15.

"Dear Miss Garth,—I trouble you with another letter, partly to thank you for your kind expression of sympathy with me under the loss that I have sustained, and partly to tell you of an extraordinary application made to my uncle's executors in which you and Miss Vanstone may both feel interested, as Mrs. Noel Vanstone is directly concerned in it.

"Knowing my own ignorance of legal technicalities, I inclose a copy of the application instead of trying to describe it. You will notice as suspicious that no explanation is given of the manner in which the alleged discovery of one of my uncle's secrets was made by persons who are total strangers to him.

"On being made acquainted with the circumstances, the executors at once applied to me. I could give them no positive information—for my uncle never consulted me on matters of business. But I felt bound in honor to tell them, that, during the last six months of his life, the admiral had occasionally let fall expressions of impatience in my hearing, which led to the conclusion that he was annoyed by a private responsibility of some kind. I also mentioned that he had imposed a very strange condition on me—a condition which, in spite of his own assurances to the contrary, I was persuaded could not have emanated from himself—of marrying within a given time (which time has now expired), or of not receiving from him a certain sum of money which I believed to be the same in amount as the sum bequeathed to him in my cousin's will. The executors agreed with me that these circumstances gave a color of probability to an otherwise incredible story; and they decided that a search should be instituted for the Secret Trust—nothing in the slightest degree resembling this same trust having been discovered up to that time among the admiral's papers.

"The search (no trifle in such a house as this) has now been in full progress for a week. It is superintended by both the executors and by my uncle's lawyer—who is personally, as well as professionally, known to Mr. Loscombe (Mrs. Noel Vanstone's solicitor), and who has been included in the proceedings at the express request of Mr. Loscombe himself. Up to this time nothing whatever has been found. Thousands and thousands of letters have been examined—and not one of them bears the remotest resemblance to the letter we are looking for.

"Another week will bring the search to an end. It is only at my express request that it will be persevered with so long. But as the admiral's generosity has made me sole heir to every thing he possessed, I feel bound to do the fullest justice to the interests of others, however hostile to myself those interests may be.

"With this view I have not hesitated to reveal to the lawyer a constitutional peculiarity of my poor uncle's, which was always kept a secret among us at his own request—I mean his tendency to somnambulism. I mentioned that he had been discovered (by the housekeeper and his old servant) walking in his sleep about three weeks before his death, and that the part of the house in which he had been seen, and the basket of keys which he was carrying in his hand, suggested the inference that he had come from one of the rooms in the east wing, and that he might have opened some of the pieces of furniture in one of them. I surprised the lawyer (who seemed to be quite ignorant of the extraordinary actions constantly performed by somnambulists), by informing him that my uncle could find his way about the house, lock and unlock doors, and remove objects of all kinds from one place to another as easily in his sleep as in his waking hours. And I declared that, while I felt the faintest doubt in my own mind whether he might not have been dreaming of the Trust on the night in question—and putting the dream in action in his sleep—I should not feel satisfied unless the rooms in the east wing were searched again.

"It is only right to add that there is not the least foundation in fact for this idea of mine. During the latter part of his fatal illness my poor uncle was quite incapable of speaking on any subject whatever. From the time of my arrival at St. Crux, in the middle of last month, to the time of his death, not a word dropped from him which referred in the remotest way to the Secret Trust.

"Here then, for the present, the matter rests. If you think it right to communicate the contents of this letter to Miss Vanstone, pray tell her that it will not be my fault if her sister's assertion (however preposterous it may seem to my uncle's executors) is not fairly put to the proof.

"Believe me, dear Miss Garth, always truly yours, George Bartram."

"P.S.—As soon as all business matters are settled I am going abroad for some months, to try the relief of change of scene. The house will be shut up, and left under the charge of Mrs. Drake. I have not forgotten your once telling me that you should like to see St. Crux, if you ever found yourself in this neighborhood. If you are at all likely to be in Essex during the time when I am abroad, I have provided against the chance of your being disappointed, by leaving instructions with Mrs. Drake to give you, and any friends of yours, the freest admission to the house and grounds."

VIII.

FROM MR. LOSCOMBE TO MRS. NOEL VANSTONE.

"Lincoln's Inn-fields, *May* 24.

"Dear Madam,—After a whole fortnight's search—conducted, I am bound to admit, with the most conscientious and unrelaxing care—no such document as the Secret Trust has been found among the papers left at St. Crux by the late Admiral Bartram.

"Under these circumstances the executors have decided on acting under the only recognizable authority which they have to guide them—the admiral's own will. This document (executed some years since) bequeaths the whole of his estate, both real and personal (that is to say, all the lands he possesses and all the money he possesses at the time of his death), to his nephew. The will is plain, and the result is inevitable. Your husband's fortune is lost to you from this moment. Mr. George Bartram legally inherits it, as he legally inherits the house and estate of St. Crux.

"I make no comment upon this extraordinary close to the proceedings. The Trust may have been destroyed, or the Trust may be hidden in some place of concealment inaccessible to discovery after the most patient and prolonged search for it. It is useless for either of us to speculate on the subject now. I will not add to your disappointment by any references to the time and money which I have lost in the unfortunate attempt to assert your interests. I will merely say that my connection (both personal and professional) with the matter must, from this moment, be considered at an end.

"Your obedient servant,

"John Loscombe."

IX.

FROM MRS. RUDDOCK (LODGING-HOUSE KEEPER) TO MR. LOSCOMBE.

"Park Terrace, St. John's Wood,
"*June* 2.

"Sir,—Having, by Mrs. Noel Vanstone's directions, taken letters for her to the post addressed to you, and knowing no one else to apply to, I beg to inquire whether you are acquainted with any of her friends, for I think it right that they should be stirred up to take some steps about her.

"Mrs. Vanstone first came to me in November last, when she and her maid occupied my apartments. On that occasion, and again on this, she has given me no cause to complain of her. She has behaved like a lady, and paid me my due. I am writing, as a mother of a family, under a sense of responsibility—I am not writing with an interested motive.

"After proper warning given, Mrs. Vanstone (who is now quite alone) leaves me to-morrow. She has not concealed from me that her circumstances are fallen very low, and that she can not afford to remain in my house. This is all she has told me—I know nothing of where she is going, or what she means to do next. But I have every reason to believe she desires to destroy all traces by which she might be found after leaving this place; for I discovered her in tears yesterday, burning letters which were doubtless letters from her friends. In looks and conduct she has altered most shockingly in the last week. I believe there is some dreadful trouble on her mind; and I am afraid, from what I see of her, that she is on the eve of a serious illness. It is very sad to see such a young woman so utterly deserted and friendless as she is now.

"Excuse my troubling you with this letter; it is on my conscience to write it. If you know any of her relations, please warn them that time is not to be wasted. If they lose to-morrow, they may lose the last chance of finding her.

"Your humble servant,

"Catherine Ruddock."

X.

FROM MR. LOSCOMBE TO MRS. RUDDOCK.

"Lincoln's Inn-fields, *June* 2.

"Madam,—My only connection with Mrs. Noel Vanstone was a professional one, and that connection is now at an end. I am not acquainted with any of her friends; and I can not undertake to interfere personally either with her present or future proceedings.

"Regretting my inability to afford you any assistance, I remain, your obedient servant,

"John Loscombe."

THE LAST SCENE.

AARON'S BUILDINGS.

CHAPTER I.

On the seventh of June the owners of the merchantman *Deliverance* received news that the ship had touched at Plymouth to land passengers, and had then continued her homeward voyage to the Port of London. Five days later the vessel was in the river, and was towed into the East India Docks.

Having transacted the business on shore for which he was personally responsible, Captain Kirke made the necessary arrangements by letter for visiting his brother-in-law's parsonage in Suffolk, on the seventeenth of the month. As usual, in such cases, he received a list of commissions to execute for his sister on the day before he left London. One of these commissions took him into the neighborhood of Camden Town. He drove to his destination from the Docks, and then dismissing the vehicle, set forth to walk back southward toward the New Road.

He was not well acquainted with the district, and his attention wandered further and further away from the scene around him as he went on. His thoughts, roused by the prospect of seeing his sister again, had led his memory back to the night when he had parted from her, leaving the house on foot. The spell so strangely laid on him in that past time had kept its hold through all after events. The face that had haunted him on the lonely road had haunted him again on the lonely sea. The woman who had followed him, as in a dream, to his sister's door, had followed him—thought of his thought, and spirit of his spirit—to the deck of his ship. Through storm and calm on the voyage out, through storm and calm on the voyage home, she had been with him. In the ceaseless turmoil of the London streets she was with him now. He knew what the first question on his lips would be, when he had seen his sister and her boys. "I shall try to talk of something else," he thought; "but when Lizzie and I are alone, it will come out in spite of me."

The necessity of waiting to let a string of carts pass at a turning before he crossed, awakened him to present things. He looked about in a momentary confusion. The street was strange to him; he had lost his way.

The first foot-passenger of whom he inquired appeared to have no time to waste in giving information. Hurriedly directing him to cross to the other side of the road, to turn down the first street he came to on his right hand, and then to ask again, the stranger unceremoniously hastened on without waiting to be thanked.

Kirke followed his directions, and took the turning on his right. The street was short and narrow, and the houses on either side were of the poorer order. He looked up as he passed the corner to see what the name of the place might be. It was called "Aaron's Buildings."

Low down on the side of the "Buildings" along which he was walking a little crowd of idlers was assembled round two cabs, both drawn up before the door of the same house. Kirke advanced to the crowd to ask his way of any civil stranger among them who might *not* be in a hurry this time. On approaching the cabs he found a woman disputing with the drivers, and heard enough to inform him that two vehicles had been sent for by mistake where only one was wanted.

The house door was open; and when he turned that way next, he looked easily into the passage, over the heads of the people in front of him.

The sight that met his eyes should have been shielded in pity from the observation of the street. He saw a slatternly girl, with a frightened face, standing by an old chair placed in the middle of the passage, and holding a woman on the chair, too weak and helpless to support herself—a woman apparently in the last stage of illness, who was about to be removed, when the dispute outside was ended, in one of the cabs. Her head was drooping when he first saw her, and an old shawl which covered it had fallen forward so as to hide the upper part of her face.

Before he could look away again the girl in charge of her raised her head and restored the shawl to its place. The action disclosed her face to view, for an instant only, before her head drooped back on her bosom. In that instant he saw the woman whose beauty was the haunting remembrance of his life—whose image had been vivid in his mind not five minutes since!

The shock of the double recognition—the recognition, at the same moment, of the face, and of the dreadful change in it—struck him speechless and helpless. The steady presence of mind in all emergencies, which had become a habit of his life, failed him for the first time. The poverty-stricken street, the squalid mob round the door, swam before his eyes. He staggered back and caught at the iron railings of the house behind him.

"Where are they taking her to?" he heard a woman ask, close at his side.

"To the hospital, if they will have her," was the reply. "And to the work-house, if they won't."

That horrible answer roused him. He instantly pushed his way through the crowd and entered the house.

The misunderstanding on the pavement had been set right, and one of the cabs had driven off. As he crossed the threshold of the door he confronted the people of the house at the moment when they were moving her. The cabman who had remained was on one side of the chair, and the woman who had been disputing with the two drivers was on the other. They were just lifting her when Kirke's tall figure darkened the door.

"What are you doing with that lady?" he asked.

The cabman looked up with the insolence of his reply visible in his eyes before his lips could utter it. But the woman, quicker than he, saw the suppressed agitation in Kirke's face, and dropped her hold of the chair in an instant.

"Do you know her, Sir?" asked the woman, eagerly. "Are you one of her friends?"

"Yes," said Kirke, without hesitation.

"It's not my fault, Sir," pleaded the woman, shrinking under the look he fixed on her. "I would have waited patiently 'till her friends found her—I would indeed!"

Kirke made no reply. He turned and spoke to the cabman.

"Go out," he said, "and close the door after you. I'll send you down your money directly. What room in the house did you take her from when you brought her down here?" he resumed, addressing himself to the woman again.

"The first floor back, Sir."

"Show me the way to it."

He stooped and lifted Magdalen in his arms. Her head rested gently on the sailor's breast; her eyes looked up wonderingly into the sailor's face. She smiled and whispered to him vacantly. Her mind had wandered back to old days at home, and her few broken words showed that she fancied herself a child again in her father's arms. "Poor papa!" she said, softly. "Why do you look so sorry? Poor papa!"

The woman led the way into the back room on the first floor. It was very small; it was miserably furnished. But the little bed was clean, and the few things in the room were neatly kept. Kirke laid her tenderly on the bed. She caught one of his hands in her burning fingers. "Don't distress mamma about me," she said. "Send for Norah." Kirke tried gently to release his hand; but she only clasped it the more eagerly. He sat down by the bedside to wait until it pleased her to release him. The woman stood looking at them, and crying in a corner of the room. Kirke observed her attentively. "Speak," he said, after an interval, in low, quiet tones. "Speak in *her* presence, and tell me the truth."

With many words, with many tears, the woman spoke.

She had let her first floor to the lady a fortnight since. The lady had paid a week's rent, and had given the name of Gray. She had been out from morning till night, for the first three days, and had come home again, on every occasion, with a wretchedly weary, disappointed look. The woman of the house had suspected that she was in hiding from her friends, under a false name; and that she had been vainly trying to raise money, or to get some employment, on the three days when she was out for so long, and when she looked so disappointed on coming home. However that might be, on the fourth day she had fallen ill with shivering fits and hot fits, turn and turn about. On the fifth day she was worse; and on the sixth she was too sleepy at one time, and too light-headed at another, to be spoken to. The chemist (who did the doctoring in those parts) had come and looked at her, and had said he thought it was a bad fever. He had left a "saline draught," which the woman of the house had paid for out of her own pocket, and had administered without effect. She had ventured on searching the only box which the lady had brought with her, and had found nothing in it but a few necessary articles of linen—no dresses, no ornaments, not so much as the fragment of a letter which might help in discovering her friends. Between the risks of keeping her under these circumstances, and the barbarity of turning a sick woman into the street, the landlady herself had not hesitated. She would willingly have kept her tenant, on the chance of the lady's recovery, and on the chance of friends turning up. But not half an hour since her husband—who never came near the house except to take her money—had come to rob her of her little earnings, as usual. She had been obliged to tell him that no rent was in hand for the first floor, and that none was likely to be in hand until the lady recovered, or her friends found her. On hearing this he had mercilessly insisted—well or ill—that the lady should go. There was the hospital to take her to; and if the hospital shut its doors, there was the work-house to try next. If she was not out of the place in an hour's time he threatened to come back and take her out himself. His wife knew but too well that he was brute enough to be as good as his word; and no other choice had been left her but to do as she had done, for the sake of the lady herself.

The woman told her shocking story with every appearance of being honestly ashamed of it. Toward the end Kirke felt the clasp of the burning fingers slackening round his hand. He looked back at the bed again. Her weary eyes were closing, and, with her face still turned toward the sailor, she was sinking into sleep.

LOVE-SONG.

The light is slowly fading,
  The moon is in the sky,
It is the hour for parting—
  My only love, good-by!

Hide not those rosy blushes,
  Droop not that dark blue eye,
One kiss, and one last blessing—
  My only love, good-by!

Dark as the heaven above us,
  So doth my future lie;
Thy memory like the moon shall rise—
  My only love, good-by!

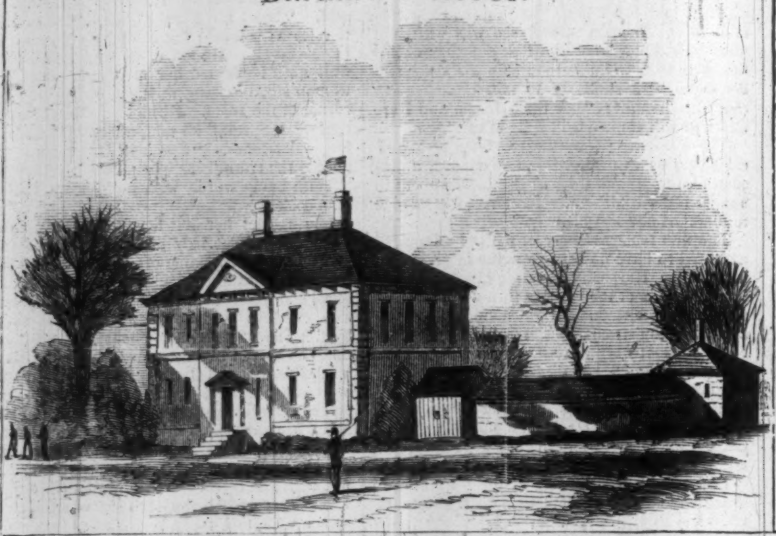
HOLLY SPRINGS.

We publish on page 29 three illustrations of Holly Springs, Mississippi, lately occupied by our troops. This little town, one of the prettiest and most salubrious in the State of Mississippi, was for a long time occupied by the rebel army of the Southwest. They were driven out of it early last month by General Grant, who pushed through it and on to Oxford. Since then the rebels, or rather some guerrilla band claiming to act on behalf of the rebels, fell upon a couple of companies of infantry whom General Grant had left at Holly Springs, captured and paroled them; so that, to the best of our knowledge, at present Holly Springs is in the hands of the insurgents. It is situate on the line of the Mobile and Ohio railway, and is about twenty miles south of Grand Junction, and twenty-eight miles north of Oxford.

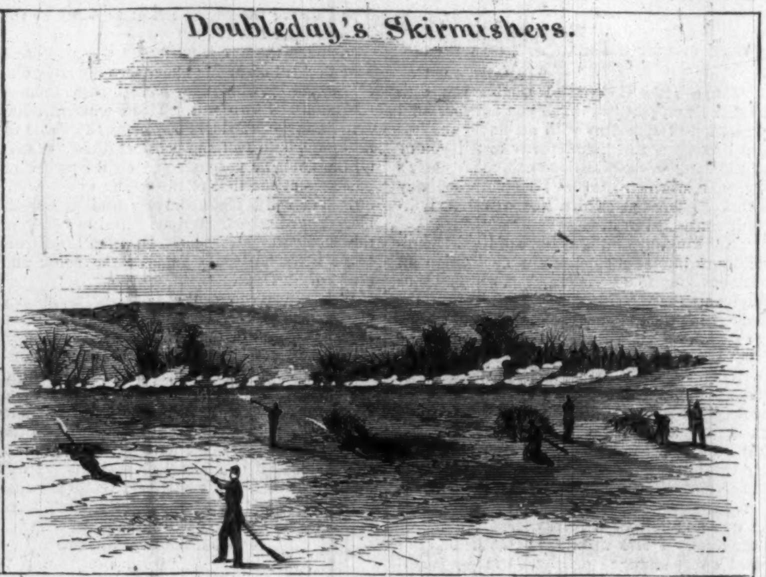
THE BANKS EXPEDITION.

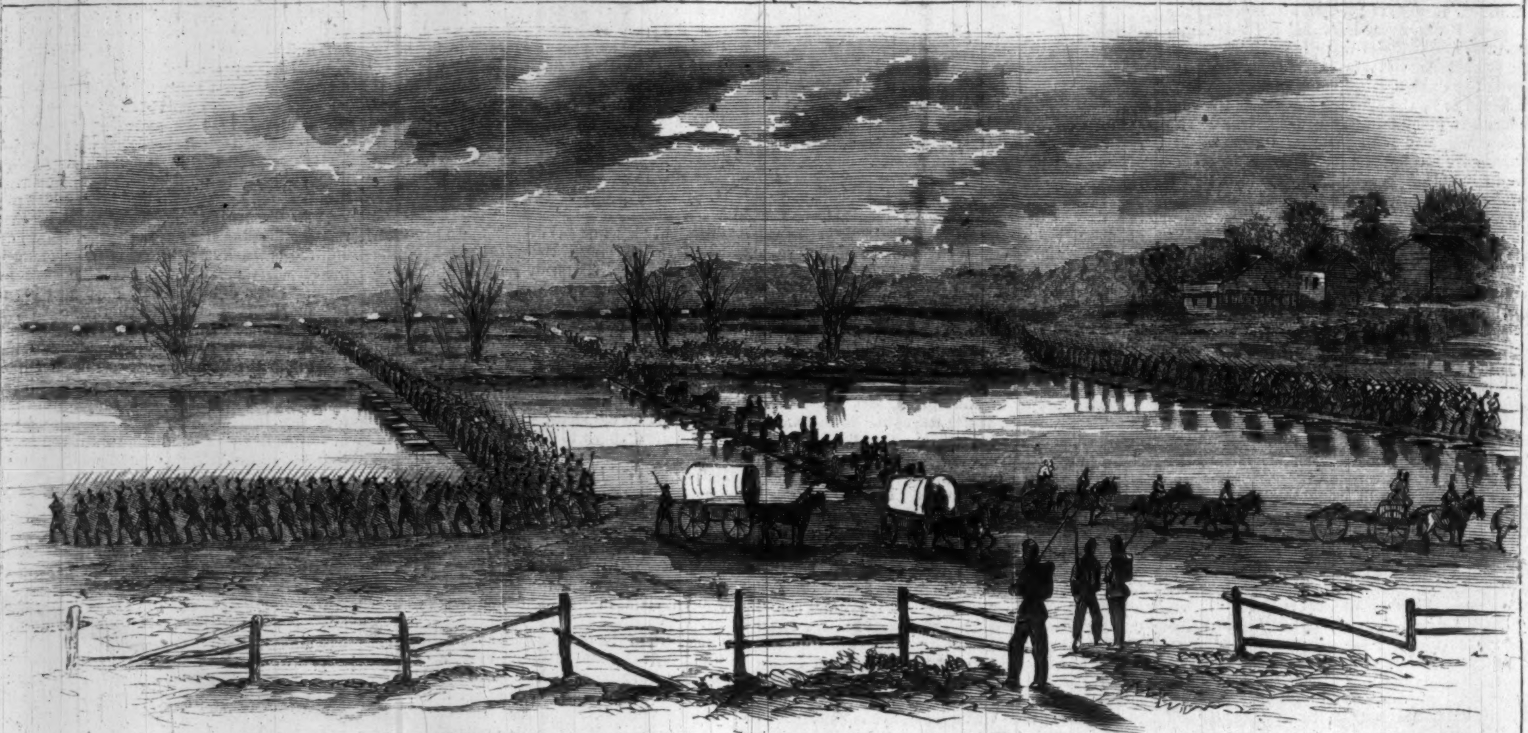
We publish on page 21 an engraving, from a sketch by our special artist, Mr. Hamilton, of the Landing of General Banks and Staff from the steamer *North Star* at the levee at New Orleans, on the evening of Sunday, Dec. 14. This solves the mystery which has so long overhung the destination of the Banks flotilla. General Banks has gone to New Orleans to supersede General Butler, and take command of the Department of the Southwest, including the States of Louisiana, Texas, Alabama, and Mississippi. He assumed command on the day after his arrival, and on the following day dispatched an expedition which retook Baton Rouge.

Burnard's House.

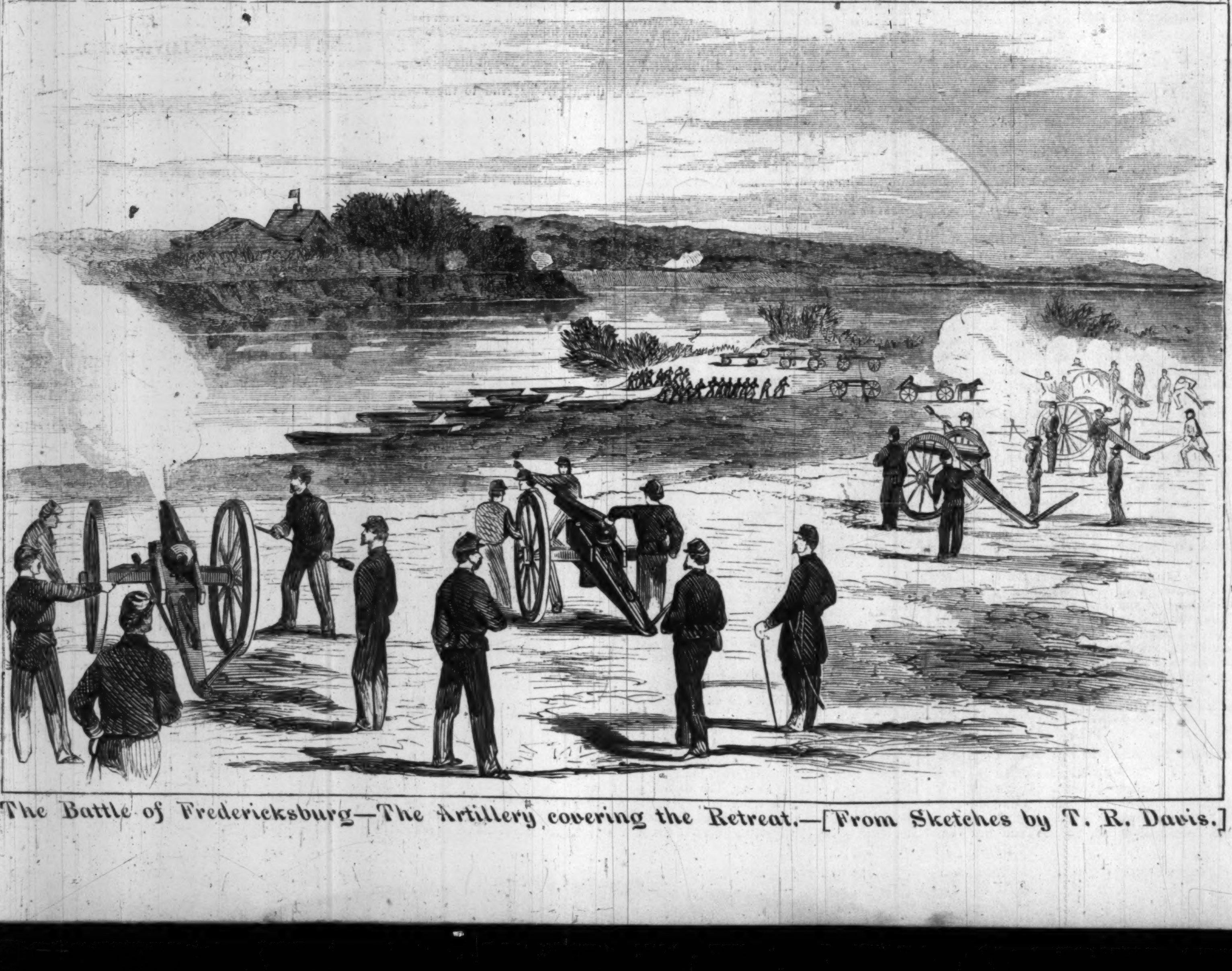


Doubleday's Skirmishers.

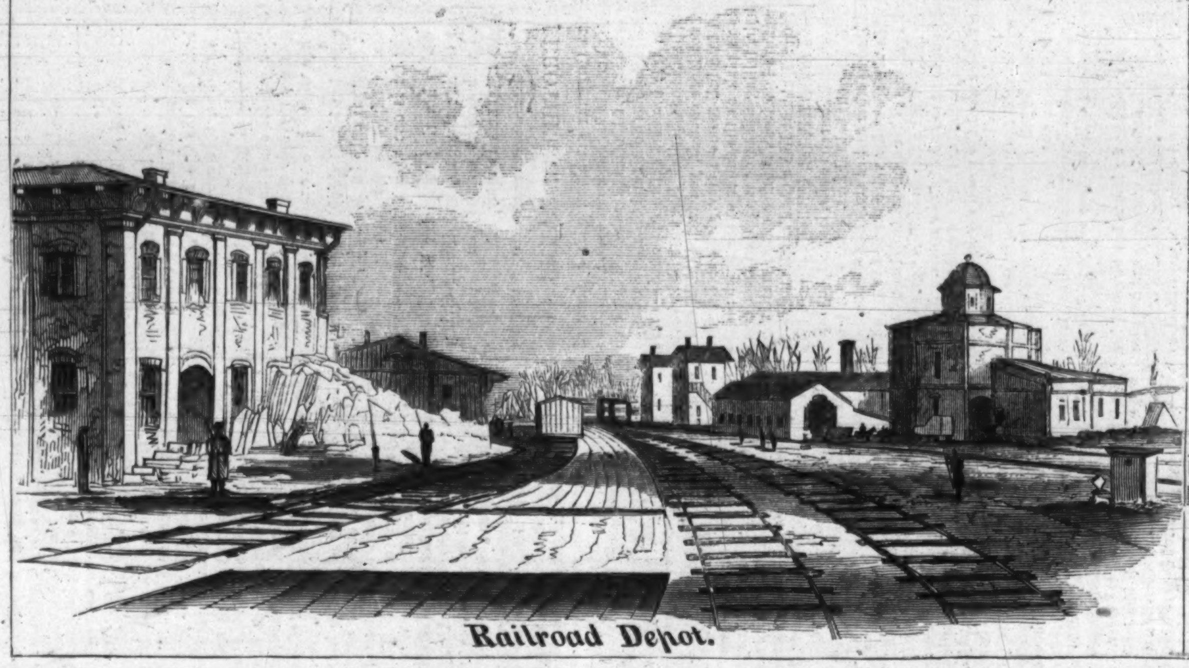




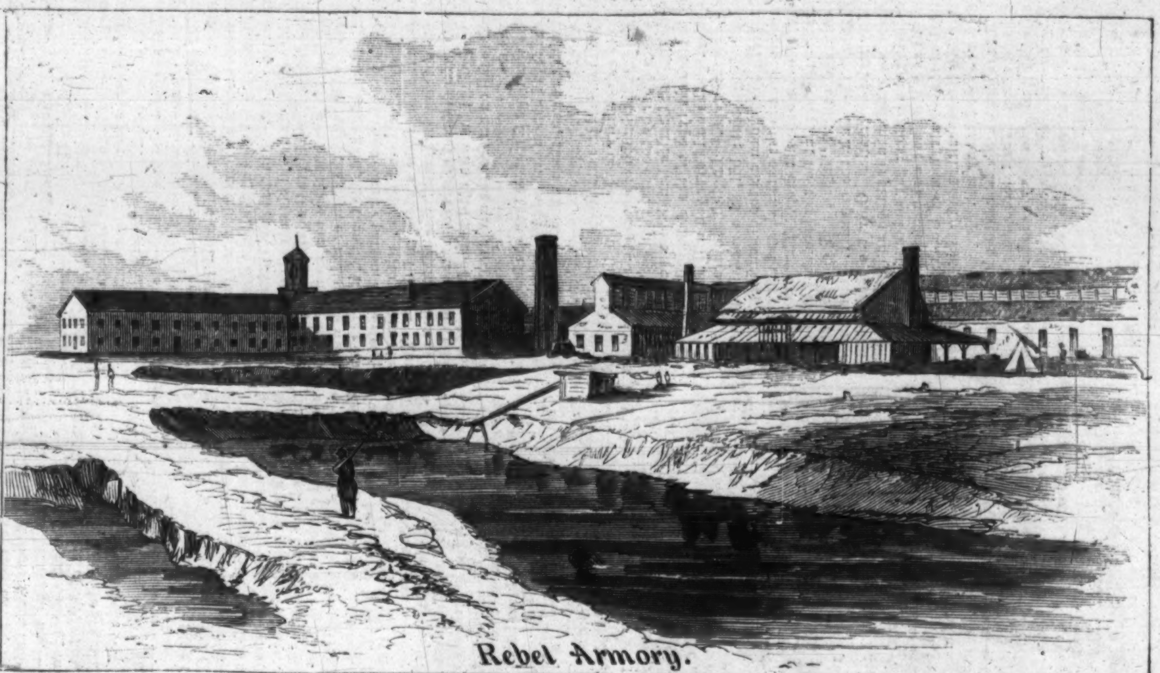
Franklin's Division Recrossing the River.



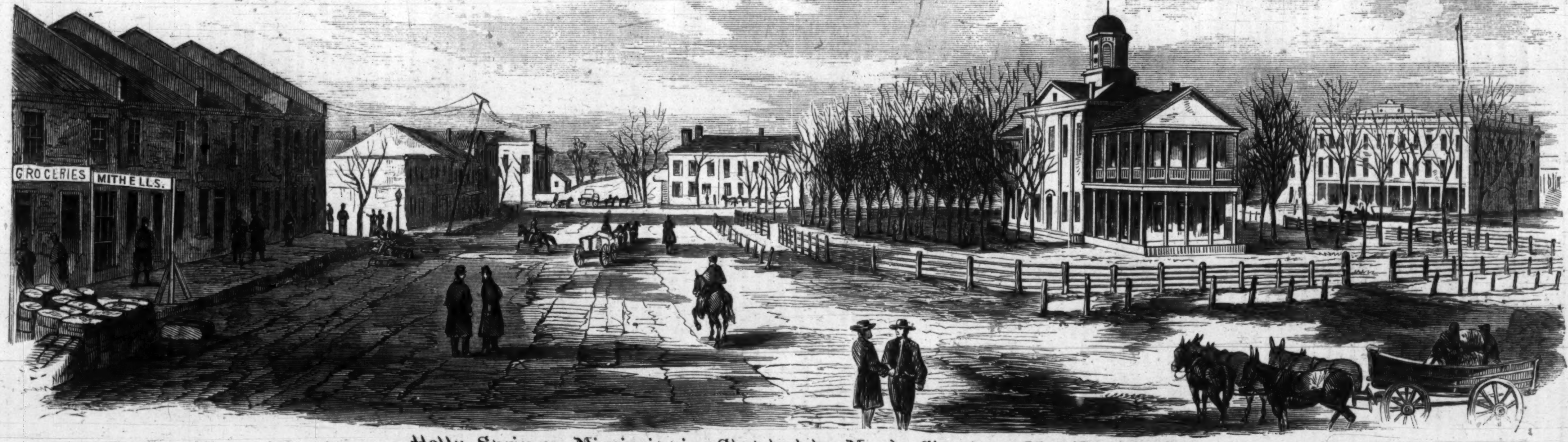
The Battle of Fredericksburg—The Artillery covering the Retreat.—[From Sketches by T. R. Davis.]



Railroad Depot.



Rebel Armory.


GROCERIES
MITHELLS.

Holly Springs, Mississippi.—Sketched by Mr. A. Simplot.—[See Page 27.]

WEDDING WORDS.

A JEWEL for my lady's ear,
  A jewel for her finger fine,
A diamond for her bosom dear,
  Her bosom that is mine.

Dear glances for my lady's eyes,
  Dear looks around her form to twine,
Dear kisses for the lips I prize,
  Her dear lips, that are mine.

Dear breathings to her, soft and low,
  Of how my lot she's made divine;
Dear silences, my love that show
  For her whose love is mine.

Dear cares lest clouds should shade her way,
  That gladness only on her shine,
That she be happy as the May,
  Whose lot is one with mine.

Dear wishes hovering round her life,
  And tending thoughts, and dreams divine,
To feed with perfect joy the wife
  Whose happiness is mine.

BROTHERS IN ARMS.

LAURA CHENERY sat alone, with a gleam of wicked triumph in her handsome eyes. What was there in that fair, false face to make men hate each other? Her cousins Robert and Charlie Lansdowne had been the brothers before she came—brave Robert, handsome Charlie! She was a little, slight thing, not large enough, you would think, to be noticed in a ball-room—a tiny, elfish sprite, with cheeks as pink as the flower o' the peach; light soft hair, falling whenever it escaped from comb and coiffure into loose, shining curls; small delicate features, almost like a child's, with a sorrowful curve to the full, red, childish lips; and blue eyes, large, and when she chose, languid, but capable of flashing out baleful fires. She was not accomplished as other women are. She did not sing, but when she spoke her voice thrilled you with a weird sweetness of its own. She did not dance, but her motions had a certain bird-like grace that needed not to be measured off by music. She did not talk much, but every thing she said piqued you into a wonder what she would say next, a sort of curiosity that proved fatal.

It was an evil hour when her father died in France, where he had gone after his wife's death, when little Laura was only five years old; and where he had lingered on for fifteen years, as Americans sometimes will, meaning every year to go home again.

There was nothing for Laura but to go to her uncle and aunt Lansdowne, whom she had not seen for all those years. Her father made the arrangements for this removal during his last illness, so that after his death there only remained to settle a few last matters, and to make the journey under the escort of one of his friends.

In judging Laura Chenery it is necessary to remember that she had been motherless for fifteen years; and that her education had been the superficial culture of person and manners, utterly to the neglect of heart and spirit. Her father had seen no faults in her. She was his idol—the only thing he had loved in the world since the New England violets had sprung thick above the heart of her mother. In his judgment she could not err. At seventeen he took her from school, and for the next three years she mingled with all the freedom of an American young lady in that gay, Parisian society in which her father found his only divertisement.

She did not like going to the quiet, country home of the Lansdownes; but there was no help, and so she resolved to make the best, or rather the worst of it. It would go hard, she thought, if there were not some poor, honest country parson, some struggling lawyer, or rising doctor, with whom she could amuse herself for a while, and then— But she did not disquiet herself. She meant to live and shine in a far different sphere from the one to which she was going; but with cat-like confidence in her power to fall on her feet she never worried as other women do.

She was more fortunate than she had expected, for she found herself domesticated under the same roof with two gentlemen whom even her exacting taste could not help approving—brothers, too, and there was wickedness enough in her to feel the delight of an ordinary conquest ten times enhanced by the zestful triumph of setting two who ought to love each other by the ears.

Robert and Charles Lansdowne were specimens of the noblest type of the American gentleman. And search the world over you will hardly find the peer of this type. Englishmen are stanch and true and persistent; but, as a race, solid, heavy, dogged. Frenchmen are too mercurial; their nature overflows in the external, and the sources of their emotions are not deep. They can love and kill themselves; but for the love that lives on silently and suffers, "hopes, and endures, and is patient," they lack the capacity. Germans are misty and phlegmatic. Only the thorough-bred American gentleman is stanch and true and long-enduring as a Briton; gay and courteous and chivalrous as a Parisian; and earnest, ideal, and spiritual as the countrymen of Goethe and Schiller. But then it takes culture and polish. Such growths do not run wild in any soil.

Robert and Charlie had been educated well, in the best sense. They were strong and true—men of to-day; ready to enjoy as to suffer or to work. Why do such men make easy victims, unless it be because the uttermost faith in women is part of both their breeding and their natures?

I think that, unconsciously to themselves, they both loved Laura Chenery at first sight. Their hearts warmed toward her naturally—so fair and young, in those deep-mourning garments which enhanced her pure, blonde beauty as all the tricks of color and ornament could never have done. So shy, too, she seemed, and so pathetically, almost humbly grateful for every attention. They meant, each one, to regard her and to treat her as the sister they had always coveted, but never had. They did not guess that, however dear sisters may be, the love is calm, and does not fever pulses or quicken heart-beats.

Laura lay awake two hours—a long time for her—one night, when she first knew them, to decide whether she should marry either of them; for that she could have her choice between them she never doubted. They were rich and well-born. Charlie was handsome, and Robert would have been called so any where but at Charlie's side. They were brave and true. She knew, in her weak, wicked little heart, that if either of them loved it would be for life and death and forever. But she said "No" at the end of her two hours' musing. She knew them well enough to be certain that the future she had dreamed of and coveted she could never attain as the wife of either. They would be loving, but never weak. If she was Mrs. Lansdowne, farewell to all her dreams of shining again in the gay world of Paris; of breaking more hearts as a wife than she had ever stirred as a maiden; of queening it by sea and shore and mountain. She must be the loved, honored, cherished wife of one man—no more, no less. With her untouched, careless heart, and her dominant vanity, it would not suit her. So she put the idea aside and went to sleep.

And knowing how fatally well that steadfast Lansdowne nature would love, she yet set herself deliberately at work to captivate them both.

It was no hard task. They had known women enough, but they had never sojourned in the Isle of the Syrens. Do you think True Thomas had never seen fair sweet faces among mortals when he followed Fay Vivian across the stream? There are women whose presence breathes an atmosphere as fatal as those subtle old poisons they used to sprinkle on handkerchiefs and distill into bouquets.

I do not know which brother yielded first to the madness. I think the spell was upon them both from the very first hour they ever saw her; but it was months before they understood themselves. Laura Chenery enjoyed that summer. There was a piquant charm in the cruel mischief she was doing. No one knew what was coming; only one guessed her purpose. Mrs. Lansdowne, a gentle, middle-aged lady, with the keen instinct a mother's love gives, had read her secret; and hated her, as even such good gentle women can hate for a wrong to their nearest and dearest, never for one which touches their own selves only.

And yet what could she do? She could not send the orphan daughter of her only brother away from the protection of her roof. Would warning her sons—her dear boys she called them—do any good? She tried it. Robert was the elder. She had always been able to approach him more nearly than handsome, good-natured Charlie; though all the rest of the world called Robert haughty and reticent. He had never outgrown his boyish habit of lounging in his mother's room, and talking over with her all that interested him—all but Miss Chenery. Up to this time, since her first coming, they had never talked of *her*. Mrs. Lansdowne was no diplomatist. She always attacked her enemy in the front, and that mode of warfare has its own advantages.

"Which is it," she said, looking at Robert steadily, "that Laura loves, you or Charlie? So far as I can discover she measures out her favors pretty equally. I should have thought Charlie would have been most to her taste."

Robert Lansdowne crimsoned like a girl beneath his mother's steady gaze. Her words had opened before him a new aspect of affairs. Could it be that Charlie loved her—his own younger brother, whom he had cherished all his life as the best half of himself? By the keen pang, sharp as a sword thrust, which this thought gave him, he knew how dear she had become to himself. Disguise was useless. His mother had taken him unawares, before he had his defenses ready. She was mistress of the position. He looked up with the instinctive appeal for sympathy, the helplessness which the bravest man might feel in precisely such a crisis.

"Do you think Charlie loves her, mother? Because, God help me, I know I do."

"Yes, I think Charlie loves her."

"Who does she love, mother? If you have read Charlie's heart and mine, you must have seen hers also."

A shiver of hope shook the strong limbs as the man spoke. He was not prepared for his mother's answer.

"She has none."

"What, no heart?"

"None. A colder or more utterly selfish woman never lured a good man on to madness. She has been striving for the poor triumph of making you both love her. She does not mean to marry either of you. The only palliation is that she does not know what she is doing. She judges other people's natures by her own, and never guesses that there are hearts of which an unhappy love makes utter shipwreck. Is it too late, Robert? Are you too far gone for self-conquest? Can you not learn to forget or despise her?"

Robert Lansdowne had not interrupted his mother; but he spoke now, resolutely,

"Mother, I should not have suffered any one else, man or woman, to say what you have said. Even when it comes from you I must utter my protest. You do not understand Laura, and you misjudge her sorely. It may be true that she would not marry either of us, but she has not lured us on to love her. She has been as artless and as careless as a child, and that is where her great charm lies. If we both love her it is our sorrow, and not her blame. She has treated us as brothers—had she not a right to expect to find brothers in the nearest friends she had in the world? She has never given either of us, as I believe—at any rate she has never given me—reason or right to look upon her in any other light."

Mrs. Lansdowne smiled a little bitterly, and a moment afterward sighed. Mothers have played the part of Cassandra till one would think they should have grown to find it easy; but it costs a sharp pang still to see the prophecy they know is all too sadly true rejected with scorn; and the loved one rushing on unheeding, rash tempter of his fate.

Going out of doors Robert Lansdowne met his brother. A bitter, murderous feeling stole into his heart. A shudder shook him lest he might grow to hate his own brother if Laura loved him. An evil spirit whispered him to go at once to her and see her first. Perhaps her heart was untouched yet, and she might be won by the first comer. And then the old, chivalrous Lansdowne honor, the sturdy love of fair play, reasserted itself. No matter what it should cost he would deal justly by his own brother. He went up to Charlie and spoke with a firm tone which it cost him an effort to make so steady,

"Do you love Laura—our cousin?"

The tone, the look, the question revealed all to Charlie Lansdowne. He knew his own heart, and knew his brother's. He answered, after a moment, as firmly,

"I do—with all my heart, mind, and strength."

"Have you told her so?"

"No, I have only just found out for myself that she is my only hope on earth."

Robert looked at him with a strange pity for them both in his eyes. He put his hand on his younger brother's shoulder, gently as when they were boys together. He said, in a low, changed voice,

"God help us, Charlie, for I love her too. We are brothers—let us treat each other fairly. If you had not been dear to me so many years I would have gone to her now, and won her, if I could, before she knew she could have the choice between us. But, come what will, we will be honest with each other. She shall know both your love and mine, and the one she chooses may stay and be happy. The other—"

"I had already made up my mind what I should do if I failed," said handsome Charlie, with a strange quiver round his mouth. "The cause so many are dying for needs good men and true. If I can not win Laura I can find forgetfulness, perhaps, or a grave, in the war."

"So be it," Robert answered, resolutely. "We will write to her and tell her the truth—bid her choose as her heart guides her, without fear or favor. The chosen one shall stay at home, and the one she rejects shall enlist to-morrow."

"You are the scribe and the poet. You shall write for us both;" and Charlie Lansdowne made a vain effort to speak in his old gay tone.

What a scene it was when those two brothers sat down in the hush of that summer day to write the letter on whose reception hinged more than life or death! The sunshine lay warm and still over the fields—a slumberous haze swam in the air—hills and meadows were green and bright—an earth in which, on such a day, Eve might have ceased to mourn for her lost Eden. And yet with what a choking anguish of suspense those two hearts throbbed! Robert executed his task faithfully. He told his cousin, in fitting words, how dearly they both loved her—one as well as the other. He told her how ready either would be to give up all of life to her happiness; to cherish her more tenderly than ever woman was cherished before. Then he bade her look into her own heart and fix her choice. The one on whom it should fall would stay to make her happiness and his own—the other would go to find death or peace on the field of battle.

When all was written they read it over, both of them silently, and then they clasped hands over it—a compact which both would hold sacred.

Then they sent it in.

They waited two hours before an answer came. They opened it, noticing even then how like Laura it was—the delicate, elegant paper, with the violet odor, and the aristocratic monogram at the top of the sheet. The contents also were like Laura—too like her. Even now she would not tell them honestly that she loved neither of them—that such a marriage would not suit her. She wrote artfully. She loved them both, she said—indeed, indeed she did; they would break her heart if they doubted it; loved them far too well to choose between them, and send one away to what she believed would be certain death. They must not ask her. Entreaties would be useless. She would never make a decision which would cause so much pain to either of those who were so dear to her. It was a pity she had ever come there. She would go away. She could take care of herself, and they should both stay at home and forget her, and be as happy as they were before the evil hour in which she came.

Her letter was charmingly worded. Nothing could have been prettier or more touching. It produced precisely the effect she had intended. They were both more deeply in her toils than ever; and in either breast arose a feeling which neither cared to define toward the other. Each thought that if it were not for her fear of wounding his brother *he* should have triumphed; and each began to repent of his generosity, and to wish that he had waited for no courtesy, but pressed his point before she knew that she held two hearts instead of one. They struggled with this feeling, and succeeded so far as to suppress its utterance. Charlie was the first to speak:

"Our plan has failed. We must try another. You are the elder. You shall go to her first, and find out whether she would have married you if I had not been in the way. I think when you are with her face to face you can at least learn the truth. If you fail, then comes my chance."

Robert Lansdowne's mood just then was not generous. He was but human, and in love; that is, say wiser than I, temporarily beside himself. He wrung his brother's hand hard and turned toward the house; for they had been sitting in a little summer-house which they had built together when they were happy boys.

He found Laura in a small parlor which, since her first coming, had been tacitly given up to her as a sort of boudoir. She was looking very lovely. Her hair was falling in soft curling masses about her primrose face, and her blue eyes looked misty, as if their beams were half quenched in unshed tears. Standing at the door, Robert Lansdowne looked at her a moment. How beautiful she was! How he longed to take her to his heart, the elfish, changeful thing! At first she seemed not to notice his approach; but after he had had time for a good, long, hungry look at her, she got up, and with a childlike cry of "Oh, Robert, Robert!" she was in his arms, on his breast. For one instant of perilous joy he believed that she loved him. If he could have died then—but death is seldom merciful, and it was better, perhaps, that he should work out his fate.

"You do love me!" he cried, in a tone of passionate triumph.

"Oh yes, indeed, and Charlie too—as well as if you were my brothers," was the answer which let him know that he had misunderstood her, and had his task to begin over again.

It was all in vain. She was a little intrigante, worthy of her French training. Wildest waves of passion were shivered to fragments, and dashed back from the smooth, glacial front of her selfishness. He could win no more from her than the letter had disclosed. Even if she did love one of them best, she said, nothing should ever induce her to confess it and banish the other. She was immovable and impenetrable. As a last argument, he told her that the effect of her present course would be to banish them both. If she made no choice both must go instead of one. I think in her wicked little heart she was glad of this. It seemed just then an easy way of disposing of them. She was beginning to find that the spirits she had evoked were too mighty for her. She professed dire dismay, but she did not yield an inch. She would not choose one and banish the other, she persisted; for if the one she sent away died she should feel as if she was his murderer—as if his blood was upon her head. If they both wanted to go and break her heart she could not help it—at least she would not feel that *she* had sent them.

Artfully, indeed, she ma [illegible] keep her place in Robert Lansdowne's es [illegible], he thought she was even tenderer a [illegible] than he had dreamed; but he had to give up his case all the same. For one instant he caught her in his arms, and pressed a kiss which seemed to scorch her brain upon her forehead. Then he went out and sent his brother in.

It was only another failure. Laura was not of a nature to be overpersuaded against what she believed to be her own interest. There is no armor so bullet-proof as want of feeling. Where there is no heart how can any wound be mortal?

It was sunset when Charlie left her, and she curled herself up in the corner of the sofa for a twilight nap—tired out, indeed, with the excitements of the afternoon, but profoundly self-complacent, and as placid as a dormouse.

"I am off to-morrow," Charlie said, going back to Robert, and trying to be brave and careless. There was something in his tone though that went to his brother's heart as no moan of anguish would have done; making him long for the moment to put aside his own grief and comfort his rival.

"You will have a comrade, Charlie; I am going too," he said, kindly. "We ought to have gone in the spring. We should have been spared some pain."

Charlie did not answer. He sat silently for a time looking toward the west, where the sunset clouds were kindling into golden flames. How many times they had looked out together toward those distant hills, and the sunset burning above them, he and his brother! Would they ever look at them again?

"Who will tell mother?" he asked, after a little while.

"I will," Robert said, quietly. "I am going to her now."

Some of the particulars of that interview were told me afterward. Robert Lansdowne told his mother all the story—showed her the letter in which Laura had replied to them; and announced to her their joint resolution. Mrs. Lansdowne tried in vain to convince him that Laura had but verified her own predictions—the impression of her character which she had entertained from the first. His faith could not be shaken. He believed, moreover, that she loved one or the other of them with all her heart, only she had been too generous toward both, too grateful for their love, to make her election.

"Do you not know women well enough," Mrs. Lansdowne cried, pressed past her patience, "to be sure that none of us would display our unselfishness in quite such a way as to banish the dearest object of our love without even a parting word to cheer him under his sentence?"

I think, tender mother as she was, she would rather either of her dear boys should have gone away, with the certainty of never returning, than to have had him stay to be Laura Chenery's husband. At any rate she did not oppose them. She gave them her blessing the next morning, though the tears choked her words; and then she put her hand into their father's, turning for comfort, with pale, piteous face, to the love that had been her joy and pride before they were born.

They went away without seeing Laura again. She begged to be spared the pain of bidding them adieu, and you may be sure Mrs. Lansdowne did not urge her. Even the brothers felt it was for the best they should not see again the fair child's face that had worked their woe.

They joined a regiment that had already been some months in the field and seen hard service, and so from the first they became familiar with the actual presence of war. They shared together many a perilous reconnoissance, many a weary march. But all this time there had been a certain reserve between them. The frank, warm-hearted freedom of their boyish love was gone. There were some subjects of which they never spoke. I wonder whether into those true hearts there had not crept a bitter leaven?

At last, fighting boldly side by side, they fell—both of them. Pausing a moment in the fray, their comrades bore them a little off the field and laid them both, wounded and bleeding sore, beside a murmuring brook, under the pitiless Southern sky. And there they lay, waiting the surgeon and their turn for care, or waiting death—they knew not which.

In that hour their hearts softened toward each other. They were brothers after all, and had lain in the same mother's arms, climbed the same father's knee! Charlie spoke first, for his was the more demonstrative nature of the two.

"Robbie, boy, those rebels hit hard. I believe they have done for us. Let us die loving brothers, if die we must. Neither of us were to blame for loving her. It was no treachery, for neither of us knew the other's heart. Why should there be any coldness between us?"

Robert Lansdowne remembered just then for how many years he had been proud of his handsome brother. He thought how dear they had been to each other—the dearest, till *she* came, of any thing the earth held. Could it be that there lurked in his heart a secret willingness that his brother should fall—a thought that, in such a case, it might be that joy would wait for him at home? Pangs of self-humiliation tortured him worse than his sore wounds had done. He writhed along on the sward closer to his brother's side, and threw his arm over his neck.

He did not say any thing. He was too weak just then, or too wretched; but Charlie understood the language of that mute caress, and turned his face toward the true eyes that sought it so wistfully. From that moment, come life or death, the bitter leaven was gone; there could never be any more coldness or misunderstanding between those two hearts.

They did not die there, by that brook-side, under the Southern sun. Their turn for help came sooner than they thought. Before nightfall they were in the hospital, in two beds, side by side. At the first the surgeon had slight hope of them. Their wounds were similarly located, and their chances for life seemed equal. If they had been less vigorously moulded, less perfect in physical development, they would have died in the beginning; but having lived three days, it began to seem possible that they might live yet longer. I do not know whether they at all hoped to recover. Life is sweet, they say; but how if you have exhausted the foam and the sparkle, and the cup is already at the lees? It would not be so hard then to see it overturned on the thirsty sand.

The morning of the fourth day there came a letter. It was to Robert, in his mother's hand. They let him read it, and Charlie lay and watched him. How white his lips grew! and what was that shadow that shut its darkening gloom down over the proud, masterful face? Charlie shivered with vague apprehension even before his brother handed him the letter and bade him read it.

Mrs. Lansdowne had written with that sort of triumph to which even the best of us are not superior when we find our intuitions verified, our prophecies fulfilled. Perhaps, too, she thought she was but administering a wholesome tonic, which having taken they would be her brave, cheerful boys again. Laura, she wrote, was soon to be married to a French gentleman, an old admirer, who had found Paris dull without her, and come across the seas to seek her out. She seemed very happy, the gay, careless thing—in a sort of jubilant, exultant state over her future prospects, and utterly without thought or care for the absent ones whom she had driven away. Long before their term of service should expire she would be settled in another land. Surely they must see at last how unworthy she had been, and so forget her, and bring back the old, cheery faces to the old cheery home.

I think Mrs. Lansdowne would have cut off the hand that penned those words rather than have written them, if she could but have known where and how they would find her boys. Charlie read them calmly. He could bear to see his idol broken when he knew it false. It is well that all natures do not cling to an object with the tenacity which is so fatal. When he had finished he handed the paper back to his brother.

"I am not surprised, Robbie," he said, quietly. "I have been feeling for some time that she was never worth the pangs she cost us. Let her go."

"Thank God *you* can say so." There was an unspeakable bitterness of anguish in Robert Lansdowne's tone. "*I* can't. I loved her, and that was the end. I gave her up, but I wanted to believe in her. It was a cruel blow to rob me of my faith. Is there nothing on earth or in heaven but one gigantic falsehood?"

He stopped speaking, with a suppressed groan. His sore wound had begun to bleed again in his excitement, as they say a murdered man's will when his foot draws near who struck the blow. He had got his death in that hour. There had been slight enough chance of saving him before—it was impossible now. He lay silent all that day suffering tortures to which no groan bore witness, and which were only to be guessed from the shuddering spasms which shook the strong limbs, and the great, cold drops which beaded the wide forehead. Just at midnight he spoke:

"Charlie, I am glad that we were true friends and brothers again before that letter came. Remember I die loving you. Tell my mother if souls live hereafter my soul will find hers there—the only faithful woman I ever knew."

Those were his last words. If his soul going out into the dark uttered any wild cry for God's peace and pardon mortal ears did not hear it. There was a smile more beautiful than life on the still face over which the night-lamp gleamed, but the lips were frozen.

The next spring Charlie Lansdowne was at home, worn and enfeebled, a man whose days of proud strength were over, but he lived. He could see the crocus spring up in the meadows, and catch the sweet breath of the violets on the hill-side. His nature was too sunny and cheerful for utter wretchedness, but the joy of the old days could never come back. The friend who had shared those happier times slept under the pines, beneath which they had sat together and dreamed their boyish dreams. Woe for the voice that would never answer again to any summons—the lips would never smile more. Was there any place in the hereafter where he should see again those true, kindly eyes?

Mrs. Lansdowne never asked that question. She accepted her son's last words as a pledge. She knew that somewhere, when the life of dreams should be over and the life of reality begin, they should find each other, she and her boy—her best loved boy; for she confessed it now to her own heart that he had always been the dearest.

She goes about still, pale and quiet; but oh so gentle and so patient! She tries to live for the sake of Charlie and Charlie's father; but her true hope, the rest which shall be her reward by-and-by, is in the land where Robert is waiting.

Does any ghost ever trouble the peace of fair Lady Laura? It was well that she had left her aunt before the news came of Robert's death. She might else have heard some truths that would have come back to her now and then among the rose odors and the dance music—the mazy whirl which she calls living. Is retribution a thing of the present or the future?

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Mr. J. ROSS BROWNE'S Narrative of a Visit to Iceland, illustrated by Engravings from characteristic Sketches by the Author, commenced in this month, will be continued in the Numbers for February and March.—The paper on the "League of the States" closes the series of articles describing the various attempts at Union and Disunion which have marked our national history.—The article on "Revolving Towers" will be found to be of especial interest at the present time, as giving an authentic account of the origin of the invention, and showing its adaptation, on a wider scale, to the purposes of Offensive and Defensive Warfare.—The full abstracts of the President's Message, and of the Reports of the heads of the Departments and Bureaus of our Government, furnish a complete view of the present condition of the country.

The leading articles in the January Number of this Magazine have been furnished by BENSON J. LOSSING, LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON, CHARLES NORDHOFF, ELIZABETH D. B. STODDARD, ALFRED H. GUERNSEY, J. ROSS BROWNE, MARIAN C. EVANS, SAMUEL OSGOOD, DINAH MARIA MULOCK, N. G. SHEPHERD, ANTHONY TROLLOPE, GEO. WILLIAM CURTIS.

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